

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director Policy and Governance	Council	19 September 2017

EQUALITY FORUM REFRESH 2017

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. This report outlines the changes to format of the Equality Forum for Council to note.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. That the changes to the Equality Forum format and delivery are agreed by Members.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. It is proposed that the format and contents of the Equality Forum are refreshed and changes are made to ensure that it remains fit for purpose, continues to deliver its aims and remains current in light of recent events and local need.
4. The changes to the forum will focus on the structure of its delivery and will include the planning of half day celebration events to be held twice a year. These events will be supplemented by task and finish groups, held around three times per year, the groups will be brought together to discuss particular issues or topics.
5. The refresh of the forum will ensure that its aims and objectives continue to be delivered as well as ensuring that it is being delivered in the most effective way possible and continues to support our compliance under the Equality Act 2010.
6. The changes will take effect from September 2017, with the first equality event to be held early in November 2017.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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CORPORATE PRIORITIES

7. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	x	A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy communities		An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	

BACKGROUND

8. The current Equality Forum is successful and has a positive response from those attending, with around 20-30 regular attendees to the meetings. Recent meetings of the forum have considered items from Chorley Council Officers regarding the revised Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy, an update on the Our Health Our Care programme and presentations from Network Rail.
9. The forum currently meets around three times per year and provides a place for:
 - Consultation and engagement on specific policy implementation or changes for the Council and other public services
 - Information sharing on a range of cross cutting issues
 - Networking opportunities between equality groups and other agencies
10. The forum is open to all and supports the Council's compliance with the Equality Act 2010 by providing a sounding board to share and consider all view points before making any changes and by providing a place for representatives from across Chorley to come together and network.
11. Recent evaluation of the current format of with the forum has shown that the delivery of specific events would seem to achieve a wider audience for the forum and meet the desire for networking opportunities within local groups. However, having a mechanism where specific concerns or issues can be raised and discussed in detail with local representatives remains key to delivering the objectives of the forum.
12. It is proposed that the format and content of the Equality Forum is refreshed and changed to ensure that it remains fit for purpose, continues to deliver its aims and remains current in light of recent events and local need.
13. The proposals for the new format of the forum include:
 - Half day celebration events to be held twice a year. These events will aim to bring together all groups from across Chorley and will be specific to a particular theme or topic
 - The first celebration event is being planned for Thursday 2 November 2017 and will focus on community cohesion
 - The celebration events will be supplemented by smaller, more focused task and finish groups who will be brought together to consider and discuss specific issues. The groups are likely to be held two to three times per year and have approximately 8-10 attendees best placed to represent equality strands and the particular topic being discussed.
14. The proposals for the new delivery of the forum were considered at the Equality Forum meeting which was held on 10 August 2017. Attendees were asked for their feedback on the proposals including suggestions for future equality events and task and finish group topics. The forum supported the broad proposals for change and their detailed feedback will be taken into account when planning the delivery of the first equality event in November 2017 and when planning future events and task and finish group sessions.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

15. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	x
Legal		Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	x

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

16. No comment

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

17. No comment

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

18. The changes to the Equality Forum will ensure that it remains current and fit for purpose and continues to comply with the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010.

CHRIS SINNOTT
DIRECTOR POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Kate Howcroft	5061	8 Sept 17	Equality Forum refresh 17