

 Overview & Scrutiny Committee 22 July 2020		Agenda Item No. 5
Title	Proposed Task & Finish Group	
For further information about this report please contact	Graham Leach, Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer 01926 456114 graham.leach@warwickdc.gov.uk	
Wards of the District directly affected	None	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?	No	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	Council 24 June 2020	
Background Papers		

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	No
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	No
Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken	No

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	13 July 2020	Andrew Jones
Head of Service		
CMT	13 July 2020	
Section 151 Officer		
Monitoring Officer	13 July 2020	Andrew Jones
Finance		
Portfolio Holder(s)		Andrew Day
Consultation & Community Engagement		
Head of Communications & People		
Final Decision?		No
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		
If approved the Group will be formed which will require further reports		

1. **Summary**

- 1.1 The report brings forward the scope for a Task and finish Group proposed by Councillors Mangat and Tangri following the Notice of Motion approved by Council on 24 June 2020.

2. **Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee can take either of the following options in respect of the proposed Task & Finish Group, as defined at Appendix 2 to the report:
- (a) agree the remit as set out
 - (b) revise the remit and agree to its work
 - (c) request further work on the scope by Councillors Mangat & Tangri
 - (d) reject the scope
- 2.2 That subject to the Task & Finish Group being established the Committee appoint between 3 and 6 Councillors (who are not on the Executive) to undertake the work.

3. **Reasons for the Recommendation**

- 3.1 On 24 June 2020, Warwick District Council resolved that this Committee be asked establish a Task and Finish Group. The Task and Finish Group would be charged with undertaking a review of the Council's approach to equality and diversity, especially with regard to race. Its report to the Committee would include an action plan with a view to the Executive adopting the Committee's recommendations in the report and its action plan. The progress and outcomes of the action plan would be monitored by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, with the expectation that measurable improvements would be made by 2023.
- 3.2 Following this decision Councillors Mangat and Tangri developed the attached scope (Appendix 2) and were provided guidance from the Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer, the Head of Communications & People as well as the Council's Equality & Diversity advisor as set out at Appendix 1. CMT have considered the scope for the review at their meeting on 13 July 2020.
- 3.3 The Committee needs to assure itself that the proposed Task and Finish Group has a robust scope with a clearly defined remit.
- 3.4 In anticipation of the Scope being approved, Civic & Committee Services have asked for volunteers to undertake the work on the Group and the Committee will be informed of the volunteers at the meeting
- 3.5 The Committee needs to be aware that the work of Task and Finish Group is member and not officer lead, including the production of the final report. Therefore, the Councillors appointed need to be committed to undertaking the work required with guidance and advice from officers who will be witnesses called to provide evidence. This will be discussed in more detail at the first meeting of the Task & Finish Group.

4. Policy Framework

4.1 Fit for the Future (FFF)

The Council’s FFF Strategy is designed to deliver the Vision for the District of making it a Great Place to Live, Work and Visit. To that end amongst other things the FFF Strategy contains several Key projects.

The FFF Strategy has 3 strands – People, Services and Money and each has an external and internal element to it. The table below illustrates the impact of this proposal if any in relation to the Council’s FFF Strategy.

FFF Strands		
People	Services	Money
External		
Health, Homes, Communities	Green, Clean, Safe	Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Improved health for all Housing needs for all met Impressive cultural and sports activities Cohesive and active communities	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Becoming a net-zero carbon organisation by 2025 Total carbon emissions within Warwick District are as close to zero as possible by 2030 Area has well looked after public spaces All communities have access to decent open space Improved air quality Low levels of crime and ASB	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Dynamic and diverse local economy Vibrant town centres Improved performance/productivity of local economy Increased employment and income levels
Impacts of Proposal		
The work of any Task and Finish Group should look to contribute to this element and this should be reflected within the scope.	The work of any Task and Finish Group should look to contribute to this element and this should be reflected within the scope.	The work of any Task and Finish Group should look to contribute to this element and this should be reflected within the scope.
Internal		
Effective Staff	Maintain or Improve Services	Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> All staff are properly trained All staff have the appropriate tools All staff are engaged, empowered and supported	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Focusing on our customers’ needs Continuously improve our processes Increase the digital provision of services	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Better return/use of our assets Full Cost accounting Continued cost management Maximise income earning opportunities

The right people are in the right job with the right skills and right behaviours		Seek best value for money
Impacts of Proposal		
The work of any Task and Finish Group should look to contribute to this element and this should be reflected within the scope.	The work of any Task and Finish Group should look to contribute to this element and this should be reflected within the scope.	None anticipated

- 4.2 **Supporting Strategies** – While the scope does not directly impact on supporting strategies it would complement the work within the People Strategy for internal work.
- 4.3 **Changes to Existing Policies** – At this time there are no proposed changes to any existing policies.
- 4.4 **Impact Assessments** – No equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken in respect of the scope but advice has been provided to Councillors Mangat and Tangri by Warwickshire County Council as the Council’s advisors on such matters.
5. **Budgetary Framework**
- 5.1 The report does not impact on the budgetary Framework or Budget at this stage. Any support required from the Council’s specialist advisor on equality and diversity would be at a cost to the Council. While there is an allocated budget for such advice, this is based on normal workloads and does not factor in this Task & Finish Group. This could result in additional unplanned expenditure which would need to be funded. At this stage that level of additional cost is not known but will be reported through the usual budget monitoring process and as part of the updates to this Committee from the Task & Finish Group.
6. **Risks**
- 6.1 The risks associated with the scope are set out within the scoping document and are copied below for reference. The Committee needs to satisfy itself that sufficient mitigation for these risks can be put in place to enable the Task and Finish group to be successful.
- i. Risk that a few loud voices are unduly influential; but equally those who have been discriminated against may be reluctant to speak.
 - ii. Too many issues are explored, so the review fails to complete within the allotted time.
 - iii. Competing priorities within the Council
 - iv. Difficulty of engagement during COVID-19 response.
 - v. Specialist support may be required, to provide understanding of requirements of the Equality Act
 - vi. Insufficient funds to buy in specialist support if required
 - vii. Insufficient resources with the HR/Payroll/HCP and other Service Areas and Committee team to provide support for the review.

- viii. The review will be based on data held by the Council and it is known that a significant number of people do not declare their ethnicity on forms.
- ix. There may be some aspects which require approval from both the current Employment Committee and Executive.

6.2 The particular concern from officers is with regard to risks iii, iv and v, vi, and vii. These all focus about the availability of resources to support and provide evidence to the Councillors working on the Task & Finish Group. Officers are committed to supporting the Task & Finish Group but this will lead to a reprioritisation of other work across Council. In respect of specialist support from WCC as the Council's advisor on Equality & Diversity, there would be the potential for additional cost as outlined in part 5 of this report.

7. Alternative Option(s) considered

7.1 The alternative options for the Committee are all set out within the recommendations of this report as they need to determine the next steps.

Appendix 1

I think the group needs to identify what some of the key issues are - What data do we have and what is it telling us? Do we need to get more data (quantitative and qualitative)? Is there an issue? Is the data reliable? If not then I would suspect an action will be to ensure the infrastructure is in place to capture and utilise data in setting actions and measuring progress.

Engagement with BAME communities will be important throughout - who's sitting on this task and finish group? Is the group diverse? I can't see where is says about surveying staff? I think it's more about engagement and utilising channels like your annual staff survey that are already in place to do so.

Target driven approaches can sometimes be quite harmful in relation to just trying to diversify the percentage of BAME employees in the workforce - I'm not sure if that's what is meant under Indicators of Success, but just something to think about.

I would suggest that we need to be looking at this intersectionality - we're not just talking about the experiences of BAME people, but BAME people with a disability, BAME people from the LGBT+ community etc.

Here's some links to some useful resources:

1. https://www.cipd.co.uk/news-views/news-articles/racism-no-place-society?utm_source=mc&utm_medium=email&utm_content=cipdupdate_01072020.EdL1_Four_Principles_Racism_NV&utm_campaign=cipd_update&utm_term=5190695
2. https://www.peoplemanagement.co.uk/news/articles/how-to-address-racism-with-positive-leadership?utm_source=mc&utm_medium=email&utm_content=pm_daily_01072020.How+to+address+racism+with+positive+leadership&utm_campaign=7295441&utm_term=5419831
3. https://www.cipd.co.uk/news-views/tackling-racism-workplace?j=1013156&sfmc_sub=72508136&l=8757_HTML&u=20728811&mid=7295451&jb=37&utm_source=mc&utm_medium=email&utm_content=C134_mem_updates_vvx_w15_CharteredMember.antiracism_hub&utm_campaign=mem_updates&utm_term=1068955
4. <https://dileaders.com/blog/so-youve-supported-blacklivesmatter-whats-next/>

Best wishes,

Keira Rounsley (She / Her)

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Practitioner

People Solutions

Enabling Services

Resources Directorate

Warwickshire County Council

Advice on Engagement in the Democratic Process

The responsibility for the Electoral Register and administration of elections are those of the Returning Officer (RO) and the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) and while these are both duties undertaken by the Chief Executive are, by law, separate to Warwick District Council. The Returning officer has statutory functions to undertake and guidelines from the Electoral Commission to follow on these matters. No data is recorded in respect of ethnicity of either electorate or candidates at elections therefore how would this be identified as an area of concern and then measured and improved upon. If this focussed on communications and how the RO/ERO knew if messages were reaching all parts of the community this could be considered but on scoping this specific part guidance should be sought from the Electoral Commission as well. At the conclusion of the Task & Finish Group this would not be a matter for the Executive to take a decision on but for Licensing & Regulatory Committee to take a view on.

Graham Leach

Democratic Services Manager and
Deputy Monitoring Officer

Scrutiny Review Outline

Review Topic (Name of review)	The Council's approach to equality and diversity, especially with regard to race
Working Group Members	Cllrs Mangat and Tangri. Along with no more than four other Councillors (not on the Executive) to be appointed by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Key Officer Contact	Tracy Dolphin, Head of P & C, Tarandeep Mahal, HR Business Partner, Liz Young, Community Partnership Team Manager, Rose Winship, Head of Cultural Services (Chair of PSSG), Nicki Curwood Marketing and Communications Manager (others as and when required)
Scrutiny Officer Support	TBC
Rationale (key issues and/or reason for doing the review)	On 24 June 2020 Council approved a notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Mangat and seconded by Councillor Tangri. Part of the Motion requested that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee establish a Task and Finish Group. The Task and Finish Group would be charged with undertaking a review of the Council's approach to equality and diversity, especially with regard to race. Its report to the Committee would include an action plan with a view to the Executive adopting the Committee's recommendations in the report and its action plan. The progress and outcomes of the action plan would be monitored by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, with the expectation that measurable improvements would be made by 2023.
Purpose/Objective of Review (specify exactly what the review should achieve)	<p>To review the Council's approach, both internally and externally, to racial equality in the broader context of equality and diversity.</p> <p>With a view to providing assurance on the current work the Council undertakes on equalities and provides a framework for enhancing this.</p> <p>Areas to consider will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feedback from sectors of WDC workforce, safe space to raise issues, relationships, health and wellbeing. Processes and Management Information relating to recruitment at all levels, retention and promotion. 2. WDC's engagement with residents, particularly where WDC is providing services, but also including the effectiveness of public messaging (website, press releases etc). 3. All contractors dealing with residents by exploring the procurement practices and which race equality conditions are applied into tenders if any. 4. WDC's promotion of racial equality generally e.g. addressing hate crime. 5. If the Council can do more to encourage engagement of BAME residents in democratic processes including standing for election and identifying its messages reach these Communities.

<p>Scope of the Topic (what is specifically to be included/excluded)</p>	<p>Reviewing our existing approach to racial equality and promoting diversity and considering any areas to improve that are not already within the existing action plan’).</p> <p>The Group will have three core focuses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Equality within the work force of the Council (2) Equality in the services it (and its contractors deliver) (3) The promotion of racial equality generally e.g. addressing hate crime <p>The review cannot consider any perceptions or allegations of failure to comply with the equality act by other organisations. If this occurs the Group will refer these to the appropriate party.</p> <p>The review cannot consider the equalities of other organisations, including the diversity of its contractors staffing. It could however share findings with its contractors (in respect of staffing for them to be aware of)</p>
<p>Indicators of Success (what factors would tell you what a good review should look like)</p>	<p>Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely (SMART) outcomes that identify the maturity of racial inclusivity within WDC, the development of anti-discriminatory positive action plans and dashboards.</p>
<p>Specify Evidence Sources (Background Information documents to look at)</p>	<p>Current WDC Policies WDC staff equality data WDC data held in respect of customer equality criteria WDC data of complaints made regarding equalities Information held by WDC contractors of equality of their customers WDC data on measuring success of marketing and advertising Best practice from other organisations including other councils. Engagement with relevant groups: see purpose, above.</p>
<p>Specify Witnesses/Experts (Who to see and when)</p>	<p>Stakeholders identified below should be considered experts in terms of their experiences. Also organisations that specialise in this work should be consulted e.g. the Equality and Inclusion Partnership.</p>
<p>Specify Site Visits (where and when)</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Consultation with Stakeholders (who should we consult?)</p>	<p>WDC staff and councillors including those with strategic responsibility. Groups identified in ‘Purpose’ above. Both individuals and groups within the local BAME community in Warwick District, including Community Leaders. Warwick District Council recognised Trades Unions</p>
<p>Level of Publicity (what level is appropriate and what method should be used)</p>	<p>High. There is considerable public interest in this review. The Council should welcome views, experiences and input from residents. These will be developed</p>
<p>Barriers/dangers/risks (identify any weaknesses or potential pitfalls)</p>	<p>Risk that a few loud voices are unduly influential; but equally those who have been discriminated against may be reluctant to speak.</p>

		<p>Too many issues are explored, so the review fails to complete within the allotted time.</p> <p>Competing priorities within the Council</p> <p>Difficulty of engagement during COVID-19 response.</p> <p>Specialist support may be required, to provide understanding of requirements of the Equality Act</p> <p>Insufficient funds to buy in specialist support if required</p> <p>Insufficient resources with the HR/Payroll/HCP and other Service Areas and Committee team to provide support for the review.</p> <p>The review will be based on data held by the Council and it is known that a significant number of people do not declare their ethnicity on forms.</p> <p>There may be some aspects which require approval from the current Employment Committee and some from the Executive.</p>	
Projected Start Date	August 2020	Draft Report Deadline	January 2021
Meeting Frequency	Fortnightly	Projected Completion Date	March 2021
Date to evaluate impact		Annual report in 2022 and March 2023 outlining performance against the agreed recommendations	
Methods of tracking / Evaluating		Using the annual targets and dashboards.	