

<b>Item No.</b> 7.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 24 April 20203	<b>Committee:</b> Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<b>Report title:</b>		Progress update on the Southwark Equality Framework and Equality Audit	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Stephen Douglass, Director of Communities	

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To note the progress update on the Southwark Equality Framework and the Equality Audit.
2. To note that the Equality audit report findings and recommendations contribute to the refresh of Southwark Stands Together and Southwark Equality Framework.
3. That the audit report and recommendations be presented to a future OSC and the OSC be invited to comment on the findings and engage in the refresh of Southwark Stands Together and the Southwark Equality Framework.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

4. Cabinet approved the Southwark Equality Framework on 13 July 2021 as a framework and action plan to undertake a more detailed analysis of inequality in Southwark, develop a clear definition of inequality and identify what our cross council priorities are for closing the gap.
5. Implementation of the Southwark Equality Framework aimed to help us to ensure that equality is at the core of our plans for example through:
  - Knowing our communities; finding out about diverse needs of our local communities and neighbourhoods; equality data mapping; consultation and engagement; working in different ways with our local partners and groups
  - Collecting and analysing equality monitoring information about our service users and potential service users and our staff.
  - Undertaking equality analysis at the start of all our reviews, projects, developments, policy making and building upon these throughout through to informing decision making and implementation.

6. Our commitments to promote equality in the borough, in our council values, principles and objectives, in the Council Delivery Plan, Southwark 2030 and in our approach to community engagement, go hand in hand with our legal obligations in the Public Sector Equality Duty. All put local communities at the centre of decision-making.
7. The Public Sector Equality Duty as a positive duty to promote equality forms a core element of the Council's Framework for Equality.
8. Delivering the Council Plan's aim of Closing the Gap and delivering fairer outcomes for our residents is supported by our Southwark Stands Together commitments and pledges and the implementation of the Southwark Equality Framework.
9. The Southwark Equality Framework outlines the council's commitment to putting equality at the heart of everything we do. It sets out what the legislation expects of us and what the council is committed to doing to mainstream our equality, diversity and inclusion work and make it part of our day to day business.
10. The Southwark Equality Framework is informed by and builds on:
  - The Council's commitments to the Public Sector Equality Duty (including the Socio-Economic Duty) and Equality Act 2010.
  - The borough plan commitment to making Southwark fairer and more equal.
  - The Local Government Association's Equality Framework for Local Government approach adapted to the Southwark context.
11. The Framework is about targeting effort where improvement is most needed to tackle inequalities within and between communities. It is also crucially about promoting equality, good community relations, tackling barriers to equal access and preventing and addressing all forms of discrimination, including systemic and institutional discrimination.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

12. The Southwark Equality Framework identified the following 8 equality objectives linked to the objectives of the borough plan:
  - Stand together against all forms of racism and discrimination.
  - Tackle health inequalities so everyone can live a healthy life.
  - Reduce the number of vulnerable people in our borough, including by providing targeted engagement and support to groups most affected by COVID-19.
  - Provide decent homes for all.
  - Give young people in our borough the best opportunities in life.
  - Put communities at the heart of everything we do from services to decision-making, ensuring everyone is heard especially marginalised

- communities.
- Deliver a fair and green economic recovery where no-one is left behind.
- Tackle abuse, harassment, exploitation and violence

13. A summary of the actions set out in the Framework together with progress against each of these objectives is set out in the table below:

<b>Objective 1: Stand together against all forms of racism and discrimination.</b>	
Strengthen our approach to equality embedding and integrating it in everything we do as a council.	<p>Southwark Equality Framework agreed</p> <p>Equality Audit commissioned and underway – more detail on the audit is set out below.</p> <p>Council intranet and internet content was updated following agreement of the framework.</p> <p>Following the 2021 census a suite of population profiles for Southwark has been published on the council website:  <a href="#">Census 2021 - Southwark Council</a></p> <p>Commissioned EINA training to support staff undertake an EDI assessment of proposed changes.</p>
Increase representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities in community leadership positions and promote good community relations and inclusion.	<p>Arts Board Diversification Programme co-developed with and delivered by Olmec, a race equality specialist, known for its Black on Board skills development work. 13 delegates have taken up 14 year-long Special Independent Director (SID) placements with 10 arts organisations. 1 delegate has also been accelerated to a full trusteeship with Borough Market, meaning that, in total, the training programme has resulted in 14 SID placements &amp; 1 trusteeship across 11 organisations.</p> <p>Reporting on Black Asian and Minority Ethnic board membership takes place as part of the council’s grant portal. A comprehensive independent review was undertaken of council grant making and commissioning to identify and remove barriers to equal access and a new Equalities Grants programme has now launched.</p> <p>Work has begun to commission a council civic leadership programme to develop the capacity of people from diverse backgrounds to take up a wide range of civic leadership positions.</p>
Celebrate the rich diversity of the borough and promote good	Review of culture and events grants completed March 2022; first year of new Culture Together funding programme March 2023.

<p>community relations equality and inclusion.</p>	<p>Developed and launched I Create grants to support black and culturally diverse artists 7 artists received support. Research &amp; Development activity and the mentoring element of the programme has begun for most artists and will complete in Spring / Summer 2023.</p> <p>New Culture Together Grants programme launched in 2022/23; £144,000 - £152,000 awarded annually to activity that achieves or celebrates better representation in one of four focus areas: audiences, workforce, artists, governance.</p> <p>A model for a community-led consultation about how Southwark can best support and celebrate Black Culture has been co-designed with a steering group with 3 focus areas: premises and infrastructure, skills &amp; networks, and advocacy &amp; visibility campaigns. Individuals and organisations will be invited to apply via an open call process to take on one or more of the constituent tasks within the consultation, paid one of three daily rates based on the skills and experience level each specific task requires.</p> <p>The consultation should launch in September 2023, alongside the development of the new cultural strategy for the borough, and informed by the findings from Southwark 2030.</p>
<p>Continue to implement all recommendations arising from our Southwark Stands Together programme.</p>	<p>Southwark Stands Together is aligned to the Southwark Equality Framework and progress has been made across all commitments, notably:</p> <p>A Consultation Toolkit has been developed to support staff to more effectively engage with Black Asian and Minority Ethnic communities</p> <p>A new Public Arts Policy was published in April. The policy has been designed to ensure all new public art is commissioned using inclusive and anti-racist processes. Undertook an Anti-Racism Public Realm audit that created a name- bank to use in the future. New developments utilising name-bank suggestions include the Una Marson library and the Alfred Fagan Apartments. Commissioned</p> <p>Olmec, a community-led race equality organisation, to deliver the Black on Board programme designed to provide people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds with the skills and confidence to take on board positions</p> <p>Commissioned the Southwark Pioneers Fund Start-Up and Growth contracts aiming to support people who are under-</p>

	<p>represented in entrepreneurship.</p> <p>Police encounter panels are underway in the borough after the pilot stage. These include representation from the community, including young people, looking at Stop and Search. These newer mechanism, including existing local community monitoring groups will feed into the oversight which the Community Safety Plan has to address confidence and trust.</p>
<p>Make Southwark a Borough of Sanctuary, working with community groups and partners to help and support refugee, migrant and asylum seekers in Southwark, and campaign to end the Hostile Environment.</p>	<p>Multiagency forum now established. Southwark is a non-awarded member of the Cities of Sanctuary network. Following an in depth piece of research undertaken by St George’s University of the Health &amp; Wellbeing needs of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees the Forum is developing the action plan.</p>
<p><b>Objective 2: Tackle health inequalities so everyone can live a healthy life.</b></p>	
<p>Close the gap in health inequalities that affect our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities.</p>	<p>Public Health undertook a Systemic Bias Review of Commissioning, resulting in the development of a toolkit to embed EDI into commissioning practice within Children and Adults services.</p> <p>Social Finance and Centric were commissioned to develop and test approaches to community engagement and coproduction with seldom-heard communities. A focus of this work was on building trust with Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.</p> <p>Targeted work has been undertaken to improve uptake of NHS health checks in Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. Data from Q2 shows 996 NHS health checks completed for the South Federation, with 63% of those completed with patients from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background. The North Federation has completed 1,270 NHS Health Checks with 50% of those completed with patients from a Black, Asian and minority background. Health equity audits have started for key preventative programmes: cancer screening and pre-school immunisations.</p>

	<p>Promotion of Healthy Start Scheme to increase the number of low-income pregnant women and families who benefit from the scheme -latest data indicates 62% take-up of the scheme.</p>
<p>Tackle food insecurity and in a way that tackles the inequality, root causes and reasons behind it.</p>	<p>Supported over 16,000 families through food security interventions, including Holiday Food Support.</p> <p>Redistributed over half a million kilograms of surplus food to community food projects in the borough.</p> <p>Trained 104 managers and service leads in ways to tackle health inequalities, as part of our newly agreed health inequalities framework.</p> <p>Distributed activity packs to 736 families who were accessing community food hubs, containing items such as balls and frisbees so they could be active during lockdown.</p>
<p>Invest in our leisure centres so every resident can access high quality leisure services and so that leisure services contribute to tackling inequality.</p>	<p>Leisure contract options appraisal with route to implementation and action plan agreed by cabinet in light of COVID-19 pandemic to deliver optimum management model. Insourcing of Leisure service due to complete</p> <p>One aim of the insourcing is to help us ensure our leisure offer is focused primarily on helping the council achieve its objectives to reduce inequality and improve the health of residents.</p> <p>The leisure offer is already ambitious, providing free swim and gym and adult swimming lessons, to everyone who lives in the borough. An in-house service will be better able to respond to council priorities. Taking back direct management of its leisure facilities will enable the council to build on the great improvements that Everyone Active has made around targeting hard to reach groups. We aim to continue to tackle inequality and prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents, especially those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities.</p>
<p><b>Objective 3: Reduce the number of vulnerable people in our borough, including by providing targeted engagement and support to groups most affected by COVID-19.</b></p>	
<p>Develop and lead a Community Support Alliance bringing together the voluntary &amp; community sector, council, NHS and</p>	<p>Established the Community Hub to support people who are vulnerable to, or should be shielded from, COVID-19. We made over 80,000 contacts to vulnerable residents, provided over 27,000 food parcels for those who needed them most and made over 3,000 referrals.</p>

<p>volunteers to support our communities through the pandemic and beyond, building on the work of Southwark's Community Hub.</p>	<p>Built on the work of the Community Hub to create the Community Support Alliance (CSA), working together with the NHS and local voluntary and community groups and charities to provide continued support.</p> <p>Ensured that 100% of all those within the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) group assessed as requiring additional tailored support received it. This included over 1,000 residents within the CEV group.</p> <p>Maintained regular contact with around 10,000 vulnerable council residents throughout the pandemic through our Residents Services teams.</p> <p>In 2022 provided 19,000 low-income households with support with energy costs through the Southwark Energy Support Fund this winter, working with VCS partners to identify vulnerable residents, and lobbied government alongside members of the Southwark Community Support Alliance, to put long-term measures in place to tackle the cost of living crisis and rise in energy bills.</p>
<p>Work with the NHS to promote take-up of COVID-19 vaccination to relevant populations.</p>	<p>Worked closely with our NHS partners to provide data and identify a range of suitable venues for the COVID-19 vaccination programme. A vaccination van was used for clinics to deliver vaccinations along with faith venues, car parks and libraries.</p> <p>Used every channel available to us to get key messages out to local people and keep them safe, including regular newsletters, councillor briefings, additional COVID-19-specific editions of Southwark Life magazine, social media posts, regular updates for our faith leaders, translated materials, park and street signage, digivans and outdoor advertising.</p>
<p>Provide targeted engagement and support to groups most affected by COVID-19, including Black, Asian and minority ethnic residents, older people and those with disabilities and long term health conditions</p>	<p>We have now recruited over 145 Community Health Ambassadors from diverse communities, with 75% from Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds. The Ambassadors support Voluntary and Community Sector groups that work with diverse communities including older people and people with disabilities.</p> <p>Training has recently taken place for the ambassadors in support of cancer screening services and messages and in community research methods.</p> <p>The Ambassadors programme has recently been embedded in the Holiday Food and Fun programme, enabling all holiday providers to be trained up as ambassadors.</p>

<b>Objective 4: Provide decent homes for all.</b>	
Tackle housing inequality by working to drive up standards across council housing and across the private rented sector.	<p>Established a Southwark Private Renters Forum from key stakeholder organisations which is meeting monthly to support the work and has now achieved the goal of longer term support for private renters through Citizens Advice Southwark.</p> <p>Handled 1,299 complaints against private landlords and continued the successful PRS licensing scheme.</p>
Increase the number of council homes in Southwark.	During 2022 821 new homes were completed with a further 241 with planning permission granted.
Take action to reduce the number of empty homes in our borough, so more local people can move into them.	To the end of the last borough plan the council had brought 231 empty properties back into use.
Work to end rough sleeping in Southwark, including by campaigning for an end to 'no recourse to public funds' laws that trap people on the street.	The council provided emergency accommodation to 447 rough sleepers during the pandemic, and supported 300 people off the streets and into long term homes, including 89 rough sleepers with no recourse to public funds and prevented or ended homelessness for 1,489 households to help people rebuild their lives.
Deliver the Great Estates Guarantee initiatives so that every council estate is clean, safe and cared for.	<p>Delivered the agreed 7 estate improvement pilots (in the north of the borough: Canada and Rockingham estates, in the centre: Elmington and Brandon estates and in the south of the borough: Rye Hill, Kingswood and Friary estates).</p> <p>Carried out a review of the delivery of the pilots and take learning from these to the further extension of the great estates programme.</p> <p>Launched the new food growing and allotments expansion scheme</p>



<b>Objective 5: Give young people in our borough the best opportunities in life.</b>	
<p>Support schools to close the attainment gap and ensure children can catch up on education missed during COVID-19.</p>	<p>Attainment and learning gaps identified by schools and RAG rated for all pupils who are, or who have fallen, behind. This included tutoring for those with pupil premium.</p> <p>Online learning platform Continuing Professional Development offered to all schools that need it.</p> <p>All schools have identified pupils without hardware or internet access. Match-funded the £246,120 raised from our residents and local businesses to fund 'Laptops for Learning' to support remote learning and provide laptops for 1,708 disadvantaged children in the borough.</p> <p>Work with Regional Schools Commissioner to gather information about academies and promote online/ remote learning via school communications.</p> <p>Number of maintained schools tracking attainment gaps and providing appropriate intervention.</p> <p>Increased standards in Southwark schools, with 95% of schools now rated Good or Outstanding.</p>
<p>Support 100% of children and young people with a diagnosable mental health need.</p>	<p>The council launched the new young person's mental health drop-in centre, The Nest.</p> <p>Made available investment of £2 million to Southwark schools to improve mental health and wellbeing, with funding now supporting 76 schools and more than 25,000 pupils. •</p> <p>Trained more than 260 Mental Health First Aiders in 79 schools across Southwark.</p> <p>Improved equity of access to specialist mental health services for Black, Asian and minority ethnic young people.</p>
<p>Work towards 100% inclusion of pupils in Southwark schools</p>	<p>The council, working closely with head teachers and partners represented on the local safeguarding board, launched its Inclusion Charter that was agreed by Cabinet on 18 July 2022. The Charter spells out the collective aspiration of the council, local schools and partners in the safeguarding board for 100 percent inclusion of children in education that keeps them safe and enables them to flourish.</p> <p>Southwark was the first local authority to have launched an education inclusion charter. This means that the council, local schools and everyone represented on the safeguarding board will work together to keep every child in education. The</p>

	strategy is being rolled out in all schools in the borough with a focus on preventing exclusion and supporting children above all else to eradicate the issue of children missing from education.
Invest in young people in Southwark, ensuring our youth services meet their needs and giving them a stronger voice in decisions which affect them.	Launched the Youth New Deal, including £2.5 million investment in adventure play, a further £100,000 for mental health support, £100,000 for a new Youth Parliament and an additional £100,000 to implement other Youth New Deal recommendations
Guarantee education, employment or training for every care leaver.	Ensured offers of education, employment or training to 98% of all care leavers. Achieved the 12th highest levels of employment, education, or training for and for 17-21 year old care leavers, across all local authorities in the country.
<b>Objective 6: Put communities at the heart of everything we do from services to decision-making ensuring everyone is heard, especially marginalised communities.</b>	
Strengthen our equality governance so it enables effective leadership and organisational wide sharing of good practice and consistency.	The EDI governance framework was revised and established the SST Board chaired by the Chief Executive, a Directors Board overseeing Equality and SST work and an Officer Delivery Group.
Ensure that good quality evidence and research about the needs of our communities is the driver for our policies, procedures, services and actions and put communities at the heart of all our	Produced Revised EINA guidance and templates and amend guidance for Cabinet reports and template.  Comprehensive Cumulative Equality Analysis undertaken of council budget setting process.  Workshops and training developed for all staff.  Produced revised EINA guidance and templates to inform decision making.  Series of population data profiles produced following census 2021.

<p>decision making ensuring that equality analysis is informing our work.</p>	
<p>Work with our partners in the community, voluntary and wider public sector, as well as the private sector, to share best practice and work to common goals: to promote equality and value and celebrate the rich diversity of Southwark.</p>	<p>Continued to work with the Forum for Equalities and Human Rights in Southwark to promote equality and diversity.</p> <p>Involved staff networks and Unions in the new SST Board to ensure their input into our performance.</p> <p>Held a round table with VCS and private sector organisations signed up to our SST pledges to share practice and consider next steps.</p>
<p>Develop a diverse, skilled, inclusive and well-equipped workforce, which is valued and representative of local communities and enables services to respond to diverse needs.</p>	<p>The SST workforce work stream has been reviewed and a refreshed Workforce Project Board has been established comprising corporate SST Workforce leads and representatives from the Champions and Allies Network and internal communications. The Board will meet monthly and make recommendations to the SST Board as appropriate.</p> <p>Two Senior Project Managers have been appointed, via internal secondment, to support the development of a centralised PMO function, which is expected to significantly enhance future delivery of the Workforce work stream. The two secondees will commence work within the next month.</p> <p>Four live projects are on track for delivery within agreed timescales, while one has slipped by a small number of weeks. A 23/24 corporate workforce plan is being developed. This will be informed by all of the engagement undertaken since SST began. Work is also underway to support departments to develop updated departmental/divisional plans.</p> <p>The council is participating in the pilot of the London Councils Tackling Racial Inequality Standard. The interim Programme Manager for the Workforce work stream has, with support from SST departmental leads, drafted the council's self-assessment against the Standard. The assessment is due to be peer reviewed by Newham, one of the other seven councils taking part in the pilot, with final self-assessment</p>

	submissions due by mid-May.
<b>Objective 7: Deliver a fair and green economic recovery where no-one is left behind.</b>	
Deliver our economic renewal plan so that it supports inclusive growth and community wealth building that benefits local people.	<p>Supported 1,005 residents into employment across all council initiatives, even in the face of repeated lockdowns.</p> <p>Launched a Young People's Opportunities campaign; our regular email bulletin is reaching over 1,000 subscribers with news of training and employment opportunities.</p> <p>Ensured that 99.3% of Southwark's 16 and 17 year olds had an offer of an education place by the end of September last year.</p> <p>Supported 488 residents with training through the Southwark Construction Skills Council (SCSC).</p> <p>Supported 40 creative, cultural and tech businesses through business support programmes.</p> <p>Contacted and supported 4,265 businesses throughout the pandemic via the business help desk to help businesses access support and adhere to restrictions effectively.</p>
Help 5,000 people into work including a Southwark Green New Deal to create 1,000 green jobs. Our employment work will include a focus on tackling inequality and those most impacted by the pandemic including young people, young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities.	<p>Supported 5,500 residents into jobs, exceeding the target despite the pandemic.</p> <p>Provided over £253million of business support through the pandemic. Equalities analysis of Southwark Works completed. 81.3% client registrations were from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds and 84.5% of job start outcomes were from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.</p> <p>Full service evaluation of Southwark Works complete. Over 50s were highlighted as a key cohort requiring support in the future framework.</p> <p>Structured paid work experience (internships) programme now up and running. Recruitment process underway and a four year plan has been agreed.</p> <p>Gender and ethnicity pay gap reporting toolkit in development to encourage and support Southwark businesses with over 50 employees to voluntarily report ethnicity pay gap data.</p> <p>The Southwark Pioneers Fund (SPF) launched. The aim of the SPF is to support people who are under-represented in entrepreneurship to start and grow their enterprise, including</p>

	<p>minority ethnic businesses, female founders, disabled-led businesses and young people.</p> <p>Launched our business resilience support to address the needs of many Black, Asian and minority ethnic businesses with the aim of increasing businesses' prospects of applying for future funding. 517 businesses have been assessed as eligible for the programme, with 53% identifying as a minority ethnic business.</p> <p>Created over 2,000 apprenticeships, more than any other London borough, and supported 240 young people to take up paid internships, despite the significant challenges of the pandemic.</p>
<p>Help our high streets to be thriving, vibrant and inclusive spaces that generate shared prosperity and social value.</p>	<p>Launched the thriving high streets grant fund to support in the renewal of our high streets and town centres. Through our thriving high street fund, local businesses, charities, cooperatives and community led organisations are working on forward proposals for high street focused projects. We are especially seeking ideas and projects that will support a greener, fairer, more equal, safer and healthier high street in line with the objectives set out in the report.</p> <p>Action plans have been drawn up for high streets and cross council work is taking place to make high streets thriving places.</p>
<p>Guarantee access to education, employment, training or volunteering for every school leaver</p>	<p>Guaranteed access to education, employment, training or volunteering for every school leaver and ensured that 99.3% of Southwark's 16 and 17 year olds had an offer of an education place, the 4th highest in the country.</p> <p>Launched a Young People's Opportunities campaign - our regular email updates are reaching over 2,700 subscribers with news of training and employment opportunities.</p>
<p>Support residents who have lost their jobs because of COVID-19</p>	<p>Supported residents recently unemployed into employment through the Job Entry Targeted Support (JETS) programme.</p>
<p><b>Objective 8: Tackle abuse, harassment, exploitation and violence.</b></p>	
<p>Support domestic abuse survivors.</p>	<p>Launched the Safe Spaces project - offering a safe space for survivors of domestic abuse to access information and make contact with services, with 42 locations across the borough signed up to the initiative.</p> <p>Developed a ground breaking communications campaign</p>

	targeted at young men and boys (Through Her Eyes) challenging unacceptable male behavior towards women.
Implement Violence against women and girls (VAWG) strategy.	Delivered the councils VAWG action plan designed to improve the safety of women and girls.
Deliver the Hate Crime Action Plan in line with the Southwark Stands Together Programme.	Tackled hate crime through a victims-led approach, including training for staff and volunteers, working with victims to ensure they are satisfied with the process and outcome.  Our first Hate Crime Conference takes place this month to inform a refreshed action plan.
Work with communities to find local solutions that protect young people from community harm and exploitation, including knife crime.	<p>Progress against the recommendations in the Policing Interaction work stream of SST has continued including.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewing current stop and search monitoring arrangements</li> <li>• Developing collaborative approaches and a mutual awareness of cultures between police and communities</li> <li>• Reviewing existing engagement models</li> <li>• Reviewing and Refreshing the Independent Advisory Group, (IAGs) to better reflect diversity in the borough</li> <li>• Better use of social media to engage the community, learning from young people.</li> </ul> <p>Established a Youth Independent Advisory Group (YIAG) with over 25 members who are driving work linked to all aspects of Community Safety across Southwark to ensure the voice of those most affected influences our approach. Their work includes improving relations with the police, specifically Stop and Search, through events with young people and Police, Violence against Women and Girls and the work in schools through Safer Streets work and work linked to serious youth violence.</p> <p>Supported over 6,900 young people through the Positives Futures Fund - an innovative initiative providing grant funding to local projects; offering creative and inspiring opportunities for young people to divert them away from crime. •</p> <p>Developed the multi-agency Community Harm and Exploitation Hub that provides targeted support to young people - and their families - at risk from gang related activity and serious violence. Well over 100 individuals have received a wide range of support from the programmer to date.</p>

14. As part of the implementation of the Southwark Equality Framework, the council committed to commissioning an Equality Audit process, involving a 360 degree appraisal, which includes feedback and scrutiny from councilors, community and voluntary stakeholders, as well as staff support groups and the Unions.
15. The Equality Audit aims to help the Council assess where it currently is against the three levels of achievement of the Equality Framework for Local Government on which the Southwark Equality Framework is based.
16. The audit is an opportunity to hold a mirror up to our practice across the council in relation to equalities, diversity and inclusion alongside our work on Southwark Stands Together, to identify our strengths and make recommendations on areas for improvement moving forward. It will give us an independent view of how we are performing and help us to focus on the areas that are most beneficial and impactful at both departmental level and council-wide.
17. Doug Feery and Nasreen Kaleen have been commissioned as external independent consultants to undertake the audit and have been undertaking a desk-based review of council policies, procedures and plans as part of their initial assessment. The second stage of the audit has now started and involves the consultants interviewing the Chief Executive, Senior Leadership Teams, Department Leadership Teams and Heads of Service. The consultants will also be facilitating workshops with Head of Service and other key staff to get an assessment of the extent of EDI work in the borough. Some of these have now taken place with more to come in the next few weeks. Cabinet Members, Staff Network Chairs and external stakeholders are also being interviewed.
18. An interim report is expected in June/July 2023 and a final report in July 2023.
19. Using the Equality Audit report to inform the refresh of Southwark Stands Together and Southwark Equality Framework to embed EDI principles into or policy and practice.
20. The audit report will go to Cabinet in September 2023 and seek approval for the recommendations and the action plan arising from the findings. This would give OSC an opportunity to comment on the findings prior to its submission to Cabinet.

### **Policy framework implications**

21. Our approach to tackling inequality and promoting equality is embedded throughout our Council Delivery Plan 2022-2026, that aims to ensure that everything that we do as a council is to work towards a fairer, more equal and just Southwark.
22. Implementation of the Southwark Equality Framework will help us to

ensure that equality is at the core of our plans for example through:

23.
  - Knowing our communities; finding out about diverse needs of our local communities and neighbourhoods; equality data mapping; consultation and engagement; working in different ways with our local partners and groups
  - Collecting and analysing equality monitoring information about our service users and potential service users and our staff.
  - Undertaking equality analysis at the start of all our reviews, projects, developments, policy making and building upon these throughout through to informing decision making and implementation.
24. Our commitments to promote equality in the borough, in our council values, principles and objectives, in the Council Plan, Southwark 2030 and in our approach to community engagement, go hand in hand with our legal obligations in the Public Sector Equality Duty. All put local communities at the centre of decision-making.
25. The Framework is a visible commitment to equality in Southwark and sets out how we will consider the impact our services, policies and decisions have on the protected characteristics (race, sex, disability, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy & maternity, gender reassignment and marriage & civil partnership as well as socioeconomic status) into our processes.
26. The Public Sector Equality Duty as a positive duty to promote equality forms a core element of the Council's Framework for Equality together with the Socio-Economic Duty, which asks us to address socio-economic disadvantage together with disadvantages and barriers experienced arising from different backgrounds and protected characteristics in all key strategic assessments and documents produced.
27. Both are key in enabling the Council to promote equality, address inequalities and address multiple disadvantages and barriers experienced by vulnerable people in the borough plan. The socio-economic duty complements the Public Sector Equality Duty; it is about communities of interest (those who share one or more of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010) as well as communities of place and experiences and impacts of multiple disadvantages.
28. The Equality Audit process, as part of the implementation of the Equality Framework, involves a 360 degree appraisal process, which includes feedback and scrutiny from councilors, community and voluntary stakeholders, as well as staff support groups and the Unions.

### **Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts**

29. The Southwark Equality Framework is a key part of the Council's commitment to working towards a Southwark that is tolerant, diverse and fair for all. It sets out what the public can expect from the Council, what the



legislations requires of us and what the Council is committed to doing. It explains our approach to advance and promote equality of opportunity in the borough by making equality part of our day-to-day business – including how the Council will use equality analysis to generate insight and understand the effects of its decisions on different groups.

30. The Framework is a visible commitment to equality in Southwark and sets out how we will consider the impact our services, policies and decisions have on the protected characteristics (race, sex, disability, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy & maternity, gender reassignment and marriage & civil partnership as well as socioeconomic status) into our processes.
31. The Public Sector Equality Duty as a positive duty to promote equality forms a core element of the Council's Framework for Equality together with the Socio-Economic Duty, which asks us to address socio-economic disadvantage together with disadvantages and barriers experienced arising from different backgrounds and protected characteristics in all key strategic assessments and documents produced.
32. Both are key in enabling the Council to promote equality, address inequalities and address multiple disadvantages and barriers experienced by vulnerable people in the borough plan. The socio-economic duty complements the Public Sector Equality Duty; it is about communities of interest (those who share one or more of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010) as well as communities of place and experiences and impacts of multiple disadvantages.

### **Resource implications**

33. In 2022/23 an investment of £200,000 was agreed in the council's budget to build EDI capacity establish the new team to take this work forward.

### **Legal implications**

34. The Southwark Equality Framework sets out how we will ensure that we meet our commitments under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and the Equality Act 2010.
35. This means that we will pay due regard to:
  - Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
  - Advancing equality of opportunity, including finding out about and meeting diverse needs of our local communities, addressing disadvantage and barriers to equal access; enabling all voices to be heard in our engagement and consultation undertaken.
  - Fostering good community relations; to be a borough where all feel welcome, included, valued, safe and respected.
  - Being a borough which tackles prejudice and promotes celebration and understanding of the rich diversity of its communities.

- Being a borough where your background does not determine your life chances (this is a Southwark specific commitment; Southwark has adopted the socio-economic duty although it did not become part of the PSED).

36. Due regard to the PSED is about taking into account and giving weight to the different needs of protected groups in relation to the three aims of the duty. It is about evidenced based, reasonable and rational processes of decision making. In addition to the three aims of the duty, Southwark also incorporates consideration of needs and barriers arising from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds.

37. The broad purpose of the equality duty is to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into the day-to-day business of public authorities; to prevent and eliminate all forms of discrimination, including institutional and systemic discrimination.

### Financial implications

38. Any financial commitments arising from detailed action plans will be incorporated into the council's budget setting process.

### Consultation

39. Through the Framework the Council will continue to maintain a commitment to consult with the community around equality issues, including appropriate and proportionate consultation to aid analysis of equality impacts.

40. As part of Southwark Stands Together we have developed a toolkit for engaging with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities in Southwark to enhance our engagement work and will roll this out across the organisation.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Southwark Stands Together Cabinet report 13 July 2021		
Link: <a href="https://modern.gov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=302&amp;MId=7014&amp;Ver=4">https://modern.gov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=302&amp;MId=7014&amp;Ver=4</a> (see item 10)		
Southwark Equality Framework Cabinet report 13 July 2021		
Link: <a href="https://modern.gov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=302&amp;MId=7014&amp;Ver=4">https://modern.gov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=302&amp;MId=7014&amp;Ver=4</a> (see item 11)		

## APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Southwark Stands Together Updates March 2023

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Stephen Douglass, Director of Communities	
<b>Report Author</b>	Evereth Willis, Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	18 April 2023	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments Included</b>
Assistant Chief Executive – Governance and Assurance	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance	No	No
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	No	No
<b>Date final report sent to Scrutiny Team</b>	18 April 2023	