

<b>Item No.</b> 14.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 15 June 2021	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Cabinet
<b>Report title:</b>		Report of the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission: Review of Approach to Equality and Adoption of the Equality Framework	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission	

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That cabinet note the recommendations from the education and local economy scrutiny commission arising from the interview with the cabinet member for Communities, Equalities and Neighbourhoods in respect of the council's review of approach to equality and adoption of the Equality Framework, paragraph 7.
2. That the cabinet request that the relevant cabinet member reports back to cabinet on the recommendations within eight weeks.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. The overview and scrutiny committee delegated the matter of Equalities to the education and local economy scrutiny commission for the 2020/21 municipal year.
4. The education and local economy scrutiny commission interviewed the cabinet member for communities, equalities and neighbourhoods at its meeting on the 22 February 2021 in respect of equalities issues and sought an overview from the cabinet member on the main council equalities initiatives, plans for better understanding racial disparities in the Council and beyond and how the council is addressing the many equalities related issues arising due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
5. A detailed response was provided by the cabinet member in advance of the meeting. The cabinet member also responded to questions at the commission meeting.
6. At the subsequent meeting of the commission, the education and local economy scrutiny commission drafted recommendations arising from the information and responses provided by the cabinet member as set out at paragraph 7.

## KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

7. Set out below our the recommendations of the education and local economy scrutiny commission in respect of equalities issues:

### *Data*

- The Commission supports the Council's intention to consolidate all equalities data and recommends that it is ultimately provided to the public in an accessible fashion (i.e. as open data).

### *Reporting*

- The Commission supports the Council's intention to conduct a benchmarking exercise comparing the Council's proposed equalities framework model to that of other boroughs.
- The Commission recommends the draft equalities framework is submitted to the Education and Local Economy Commission for comment once it is substantially drafted.
- The Commission supports the Council's intention to conduct an equalities audit once the equalities framework is complete and recommends that the Council develops a transparent mechanism for assessing progress annually for performance across the equalities framework, which incorporates clear metrics.

### *Capacity-building and capacity-identifying*

- Building on existing work as part of the Southwark Stands Together initiative, the Commission recommends the Council requires departments to look at data currently held on stakeholder groups and interested parties that are regularly consulted with – including but not limited to statutory consultees –as part of an “Equal Voices” audit. Where there are gaps in representation, across all the protected characteristics, this should be recorded and a plan developed to increase participation. Particular attention should be paid to Black, Asian and minority ethnic participation, along with disability status, sex and age.
  - The Commission recommends that the Cabinet member for Equalities establishes closer links with business improvement districts (BIDs) and business groups in Southwark to help strengthen engagement and connection between business and residential communities, and improve coordination and expertise sharing on equalities matters.
8. It is for the cabinet to decide whether or not to accept the scrutiny commission's recommendations.

9. Overview and scrutiny procedure rule 15.3 requires the cabinet to consider and provide a written response to the report within two months.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission agenda and minutes – 22 February 2021	Southwark Council Website	Everton Roberts 020 7525 7221
<b>Link:</b> <a href="https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=550&amp;MId=6898&amp;Ver=4">https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=550&amp;MId=6898&amp;Ver=4</a> (see item 5)		

## APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Lead Member</b>	Cllr Peter Babudu, Chair, Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Doreen Forrester-Brown, Director of Law and Governance	
<b>Report Author</b>	Everton Roberts, Head of Scrutiny	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	4 June 2021	
<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>
Director of Law and Governance	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	No	No
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>		7 June 2021