

Policy and Sustainability Committee

10am, Tuesday, 12 March 2024

Celebrating Pride month - response to motion

Executive/routine
Wards

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 To note progress to advance LGBTIQ+ equality in the Council following the Celebrating Pride month motion.

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Celebrating Pride month – response to motion

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report details progress to date to create an inclusive Council culture, including:
 - 2.1.1 current and future actions on LGBTIQ+ equality via the Council’s Equality and Diversity Framework 2021-2025;
 - 2.1.2 support to local pride activities across the city;
 - 2.1.3 and work with Police Scotland to tackle LGBTIQ+ hate crime.

3. Background

- 3.1 At the City of Edinburgh Council meeting on 30 June 2022 the following motion on ‘Celebrating Pride Month’ was agreed.
- 3.2 “Council:
 - 3.2.1 Welcomes the celebration of Pride in Edinburgh this month;
 - 3.2.2 understands that pride is a celebration of the diversity, history, achievements and equal status of the LGBTIQ+ community;
 - 3.2.3 celebrates the significant strides made in LGBTIQ+ equality in recent decades, but
 - 3.2.4 further understands that Pride is also a protest against the continuing, and in some cases, increasing, inequalities faced by this community;
 - 3.2.5 notes with profound regret the 10% and 87% yearly increases in, respectively, sexual orientation and transgender hate crimes in Scotland in 2021/22,
 - 3.2.6 understands that trans people are integral part of the LGBTIQ+ community, condemns and opposes the ongoing campaigns of hate against them and supports their right to live free from transphobia and to be recognised by society as they wish,
 - 3.2.7 agrees to continue to actively support the work of STRIDE (City of Edinburgh Council’s LGBTIQ+ Colleague Network) by ensuring the network has the

required resources to undertake their role in contributing to the creation of an inclusive culture in the organisation,

3.2.8 welcomes warmly the return of full-scale Pride events in the city after the 2020 and 2021 events were cancelled due to Covid-19, including the Pride March on 25 June,

3.2.9 and believes the Council has a central role in driving progress towards the full equality and inclusion of LGBTIQ+ people in Edinburgh.”

3.3 Council also:

3.3.1 Agrees that this motion be referred to the Equality Working Group to allow officers the space to work with members on how we can create an inclusive Council culture and a city where everyone feels like they can truly belong, including:

3.3.1.1 what progress on LGBTIQ+ equality has been made as part of the Council’s Equality and Diversity Framework 2021-2025 so far; what future actions it will take as part of the Framework to advance LGBTIQ+ equality including (i) what can be done to support local pride activities across the city;

3.3.1.2 how the Council works with Police Scotland to tackle LGBTIQ+ hate crime;

3.3.1.3 And requests the Group report on these issues and any others it considers important to the Policy & Sustainability Committee (with the option for subsequent referral to Full Council) by the end of the calendar year.

3.4 This paper responds to these requests and sets out next steps for further work to develop the Council’s approach equalities.

4. Main report

4.1 The main way for the Council to progress LGBTIQ+ equality is our [Equality and Diversity Framework 2021-2025](#). This includes an equality outcome to ensure Museum stakeholders, visitors and colleagues perceive greater fairness, representation and justice in their communities and local authority area.

Our Rainbow Past: Working in partnership to raise awareness of an LGBTIQ+ collection

4.2 As part of this outcome, Museums and Galleries Edinburgh recently partnered with a PhD candidate at the University of Edinburgh, on a project to make our LGBTIQ+ collection records more accessible and to raise awareness of the groundbreaking Remember When? project archive.

- 4.3 The Our Rainbow Past project revisited the digital records for all objects in the LGBTIQ+ collection, ensuring they were as comprehensive and searchable as possible. A digital exhibition on the Our Town Stories platform highlighted the collection.
- 4.4 The Museum Collections Centre provided access to around 460 items which together give an insight to LGBTIQ+ culture and campaigns between 1970 – 2006.
- 4.5 Members can read more about progress on all of the Council's equality outcomes in the 'Equality and Diversity Framework – March '24 update' paper which is also on the agenda of the March Policy and Sustainability Committee.

Stonewall

- 4.6 The Council joined Stonewall's Diversity Champions programme in May 2023. Since then, we have worked closely with Stonewall on how the Council can improve the working experience of LGBTIQ+ colleagues. Most recently, in November 2023, they have supported us to complete their UK Workplace Equality Index. Resource was aligned to co-ordinate input from across the Directorates to complete the benchmarking and a project team is now being established to take forward actions from the recommendations once received. Working with Stonewall it is expected that our first report will be available from them between Spring/Summer 2024. It will provide a baseline against which we can measure future progress.

Stride Network

- 4.7 For 2023/24, a budget of £1,000 was allocated to each Colleague Network to promote and raise awareness of important events, for example LGBT History month. Members of our STRIDE Steering Group are currently planning a programme of events to take place during the month of June 2024. They intend to celebrate how far LGBTIQ+ rights have come since the Stonewall riots of 1969, but to also recognise that there is still more work to be done. The programme will include a guest speaker to raise awareness of LGBTIQ+ matters across the workforce. The programme will end with all colleagues being invited to join STRIDE members and allies at Edinburgh PRIDE on 22 June 2024 to march together through the city.

Future actions

- 4.8 The Member Equality Working Group held its first meeting in August 2023. As part of this meeting, ideas for the development of a workplan were explored which included key reporting dates, a proposed approach to review the current Equality and Diversity Framework as part of the development of the new Framework required for 2025-2029 and, key dates in the 2023 Diversity calendar such as:
 - 4.8.1 LGBT History month (February)
 - 4.8.2 Transgender Day of Visibility (31 March)
 - 4.8.3 International Lesbian Visibility Day (26 April)

4.8.4 International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (17 May)

4.8.5 LGBT Pride Month (June)

4.8.6 Transgender Day of Remembrance (20 November)

- 4.9 These dates were identified by the STRIDE based on what they would like to focus, and to recognise, promote and commemorate internally over the course of the year. In collaboration with the other colleague networks, additional events are planned in 2024 which will recognise how inequality or disadvantage can overlap. There is also opportunity to promote key dates and relevant work the Council is doing with our external stakeholders. For example, we may take the opportunity to promote work that is already taking place across service areas such as libraries, museums and schools during these notable dates in the Diversity Calendar.

How the Council works with Police Scotland to tackle LGBTIQ+ hate crime

- 4.10 The Council works within the legislative framework of the Antisocial Behaviour etc Scotland Act 2004 and as a landlord has a duty of care to our tenants. This is reflected in our Antisocial Behaviour Policy with support being provided to those who are victims of hate crime and more formative action being taken against those who are responsible for such crimes in partnership with our colleagues in Police Scotland.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 As a part of this work, using existing staff budgets the Council's Policy and Insight team are recruiting an officer to support development of policy in this area. A key priority of this role will be to map equalities activity across the Council and will bring this to Policy and Sustainability Committee in Spring 2024. This, together with current work such as the Gender Recognition Reform motion, reported to Policy and Sustainability Committee on 24 October 2023, will inform the future approach to equalities and the development of the new Framework.
- 5.2 An update on the implementation of the current Equality and Diversity Framework is also on the agenda for the 12 March 2024 Policy and Sustainability Committee. This includes further examples of work to advance equality, including LGBTIQ+ equality.
- 5.3 Education colleagues are working with LGBT Youth Scotland on how the Council can support young people ahead of Pride 2024. This links with the Gender Recognition reform motion and engagement feedback from the roundtable.
- 5.4 Working in collaboration with Police Scotland, and key strategic partners such as the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Youth Justice and the NHS Lothian Mental Health Services, supports the Council to achieve common objectives and see tangible benefits to the safety and wellbeing of all our citizens across the City. Especially important within this is that this partnership working reflects our values of addressing inequality, operating sustainably, and attaining wellbeing for our city's

residents. Hate Crime continues to be a focus, and this is reflected in the work across the local multi-agency Community Improvement Partnerships (CIPS) who meet regularly on a monthly basis to discuss any trends in reported crime and antisocial behaviour and take appropriate and proportionate action against those responsible.

- 5.5 There is a dedicated Police Officer in each of the 4 localities based within the Family and Household Support Service who reviews, in partnership with the Council, the previous 24 hours calls and will prioritise complaints relating to Hate Crime or significant antisocial behaviour and a joint approach will be taken to provide community reassurance and support to citizens and families affected.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 Actions arising from this report will require to be contained within existing budgets.

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

- 7.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment will be developed for the new Equality and Diversity Framework.
- 7.2 The work is relevant to our public sector equality duty, specific equality duties, the Equality and Diversity Framework, and our broader intention to shift the culture of the organisation to better embed equality.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

- 8.1 As a public body, the Council has statutory duties relating to climate emissions and biodiversity. The Council also declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and a Nature Emergency in 2023. No positive or negative environmental impacts arising from the proposals in this report have been identified.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

- 9.1 On-going engagement with equality stakeholders takes place in tandem with the development and delivery of our Equality and Diversity Framework. Engagement has also taken place following the Gender Recognition Reform motion. We will utilise the relationship we have already developed with stakeholders as we explore options to support local activities across the city for Pride 2024.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 Original [Celebrating Pride Motion](#) Item 8.24 of Full Council Committee meeting 30 June 2022
- 10.2 [Our Rainbow Past: LGBTQ+ objects from Edinburgh](#)
- 10.3 [Gender Recognition Reform follow up report on engagement, Policy and Sustainability committee 24 October 2023](#)

11. Appendices

- 11.1 None.