

# Minutes NEREO Equalities Network

## Tuesday 14 June 2022 - Teams meeting (virtual)

### Attendees

Durham CC  
Hartlepool Council  
NEREO

Claire Holt  
Catherine Grimwood  
Stephen McCurry  
Martin Williamson

Sunderland City Council  
Middlesbrough Council  
South Tyneside Council  
Darlington Council

Kirsty McNally  
Saadia Azam  
Danielle Coupe  
Eleanor Walker

### Apologies

Cleveland FRS  
Newcastle City Council  
NHS ICS  
Northumberland CC  
North Tyneside Council

Ruth Anderson  
Louise Crosby  
David Atkinson  
Patrick Price  
Jessica Madden  
Anne Foreman

### 1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Attendee introductions.

### 2. Minutes of previous meeting

Previous minutes agreed.

### 3. Matters arising from minutes

No matters or actions arising.

**4. Northeast Jobs Website – Stephen McCurry/Martin Williamson, Northeast Jobs**

Stephen introduced Martin who is working on Northeast Jobs and explained the future plans for the page and social media campaigns. Plans will include further development of the use of social media to promote jobs, and specialist campaigns to target hard to fill vacancies. Perhaps we could identify a general message in relation to inclusive employer. On the webpage, need to fix links from council logos to the council websites. Also, future development will include podcasts. In relation to potential vlogs, in terms of 'what its like to work at the council' rather than video – if we don't get any volunteers, could perhaps provide a written document, 'a day in the life of a ....' Then focus on a particular job.

**Action:** volunteer for vlog, or draft written article.

**Action:** Consider putting general inclusivity message through social media platform.

**5. Accessibility – Hartlepool Council**

Access of Services scrutiny consultation now complete, 40 responses from members of the public. All managers have completed assessment of their service areas in terms of accessibility. This includes digital, physical access as well as reasonable adjustments to services. The information will be presented to committee. Catherine will keep the group updated with the results of the consultation and recommendations. Discussions also took place in relation to Access Able, in relation to prioritising buildings for checks, criteria used, and support offered. Any information to be sent to Sunderland City Council (send to Claire to forward to Sunderland).

**Action:** Plan for access audits via Access Able send to Sunderland.

**6. General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)**

**7. Any Other Business**

**Refugee scheme and DBS checks**

Stephen queried in relation to DBS and refugee scheme and levels of checks required. Seems to be conflicting advice in relation to the level of checks required from government guidance and previous guidance. If anyone had any further thoughts or useful contacts to contact Stephen.

**Sub-group- Standardisation of monitoring info**

North Tyneside example is now in the Teams Site, with the minutes of the meeting. Gateshead and Northumberland's framework examples are also in the Teams site. Kirsty could not find anything from LGA.

## **Equality Framework for Local Government**

Sunderland currently producing report to recommend using EFLG as a benchmarking tool, along with the establishment of a Chief Officer and Implementation group. The framework will be used for agenda discussions. Discussion took place in relation to using the framework. Middlesbrough have created their own framework based on their values.

**Action:** Sunderland to provide future updates on this work.

## **Other Assessments**

Middlesbrough have signed the Race to Work Charter. [Meeting the BITC Race at Work Charter | CIPD](#) and are working on this. They have in place a Race, Religion and Belief network. They have also signed up to the inclusive employer's assessment, which has a framework to develop inclusive practices. [Inclusive Employers Standard Inclusion Accreditation | Inclusive Employers](#), includes audit, and to work through the different levels of the assessment, and to assist with action plan.

## **Staff Networks**

Middlesbrough promoted their staff networks, on staff network day. [National Day \(nationaldayforstaffnetworks.co.uk\)](#) This was a joint health event, so include stalls from health, and the various networks. Disability network raised awareness of different disabilities. The Race, Religion and Faith network provided variety of different food, books, and clothing important to various different cultures. Also, shared lived experiences, and hoping to further develop this with training days. Also, currently developing a Gender equality network, which will be a mixed network. Discussion took place in relation to experiences of other councils developing a gender network. To promote the networks have used digital screens, private Facebook page, and QR codes within work vehicles.

## **8. Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 13 September 2022**