Minutes NEREO Equalities Network

Tuesday 18th April 2023 - Teams meeting (virtual)

Attendees

Durham CC	Claire Holt
	Mary Gallagher
Hartlepool Council	Catherine Grimwood
North Tyneside Council	Anne Foreman
	Jess Madden
Gateshead Council	Rachel Mason
South Tyneside Council	Susan Clennell, Amy Norton
Sunderland Council	Nicola Appleby
Darlington Council	Eleanor Walker
Stockton Council	Louise Deer

Apologies

Middlesbrough Council	Nicola Finnegan

1.Welcome and apologies for absence

Attendee introductions.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

Previous minutes agreed.

3. Matters arising from minutes

No previous actions.

4. Access to Work

Question raised in relation to how much Access to Work is used? Do others use anything else? And any issues with delays?

Other authorities have reported delays with Access to Work for support and funding. North Tyneside have been raising awareness of Access to Work for all staff. They have also set up a central fund to help alleviate any financial pressure, during the delays. Advisable to start the process as soon as possible, before a new employee takes up employment, so that adjustments are hopefully in place for them starting.

Also, to note 'The Health and Disability White Paper':

[Transforming Support: The Health and Disability White Paper - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](www.gov.uk)

5. EIAs

Following the last meeting, Sunderland shared their integrated EIA, which includes human rights, digital and socio-economic, care experienced, health, low carbon, and sustainability. This is now on their website and a full launch and training will be taking place for staff.

Hartlepool also including care leavers and armed forces within their EIAs.

North Tyneside have produced an online training module on Learning Pool. The EIAs cover the protected characteristics as well as socio-economic and carers. Services are asked to provide 6 priority/key EIAs as well as 'business as usual'. Currently working with transport and traffic services in relation a manageable system for regulation notices.

Gateshead working with procurement service to ensure EIAs are linked in.

Discussion then took place in relation to request some authorities had received from EHRC in relation to EIAs and artificial intelligence.

Action: Nicola to re-share the document into the Teams site.

Action: Jess to share the training

6. Recruitment and Retention

Discussion took place in relation to equality monitoring, in particular disability and whether authorities specifically ask questions in terms of a person identifying their disability.

7. Regional Update

Durham currently considering their equality objectives and approach to formulate new equality objectives. Darlington updated their objective based on previous objective. North Tyneside renew their policy every 2 years, again developed, and improved previous objectives, in line with services.

Discussion then took place about the content, type of data to include, also useful to look at trends across time over a 5-year period.

Elections - Considering the changes to voting guidance, North Tyneside have produced guidance and a checklist.

Action: Jess to share document in the Teams file

8. Any Other Business

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9. Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 13 June 2023 (Representative from NEPO will be attending)