

EMPLOYMENT MATTERS COMMITTEE

14 JUNE 2017

STONEWALL EQUALITY INDEX 2017

Report from: Carrie Mckenzie, Chief People Officer

Author: Tim Silver, Assistant Head of HR

Summary:

This report provides the Committee with the results of the Stonewall Employers Workplace Equality Index 2017.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 Whilst there is no specific decision to be made based on this report, it is important that the committee is aware of the Council's commitment and arrangements that are in place (or being put into place) to meet its commitment to be a Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ) friendly employer.

2. Background

- 2.1 Medway Council started working with Stonewall in 2010 and became a member of the Stonewall Champions Programme.
- 2.2 Formed in 1989, Stonewall are a campaign and lobbying charity for members of the LGBTQ community with a mission statement To empower individuals, To transform institutions, To change hearts and minds and To change laws. Some of their major successes include helping achieve the equalisation of the age of consent, lifting the ban on LGB people serving in the military, securing legislation which allowed same-sex couples to adopt and the repeal of Section 28. More recently Stonewall has helped secure civil partnerships and then same-sex marriage, and ensured that the recent Equality Act protected lesbian, gay and bi people in terms of goods and services.
- 2.3 Part of being a 'Stonewall Champion' requires the council to take part in an annual cross-sector benchmarking exercise. This bench marking, which is then assessed by Stonewall, results in a ranking for the council as to how, as an organisation, the council is performing in meeting the needs of the LGBTQ community both in the workplace and also the local area. This

ranking is called the Workplace Equality Index (WEI) and those who find themselves in the Top 100 of the index are promoted as being within the UK's top 100 gay-friendly employers.

This is a valuable accreditation as it sends a clear message to the local community and current and prospective new employees that we are an inclusive organisation who celebrate diversity and value the benefits of having a diverse workforce.

2.4 The bench marking requires the council to demonstrate excellence in the following 10 distinct areas of employment policy and practice:

- Employee policy
- Training
- Employee network group
- All-staff engagement
- Career development
- Line managers
- Monitoring
- Procurement
- Community engagement
- Additional work

2.5 439 organisations took part in the 2017 WEI that being the highest number of participants in its 13 year history.

2.6 Table 1 shows the outcome of the council's WEI ranking since its first submission in 2010 and the committee is reminded that the council achieved Top 100 status in 2016.

Table 1.

Year	Points	Ranking	Participants
2010/11	N/A	268	
2011/12	N/A	197	
2012/13	N/A	161	
2013/14	N/A	108	
2014/15	108	107	397
2015/16	119	93	415
2016/17	121	106	439

3. 2017 Results and Analysis

3.1 The council's overall ranking was 106 from a participant pool of 439, so whilst it was disappointing to fall outside of the Top 100 it should be recognised that the participant pool was greater and that the actual points scored were greater than previous years.

- 3.2 The council's ranking in the Local Government Sector was 10 from a participant pool of 43.
- 3.3 The council was ranked highly in the areas of Employment Policy, Staff Network Group, Community Engagement and Additional Work. Areas requiring development were identified as Monitoring, Career Development, and Procurement.
- 3.4 Stonewall have informed all of their Stonewall Champions that the distinct area are being reviewed and that they are moving towards a more rigorous standard with a focus on service delivery.
- 3.5 The council will maintain its close links with Stonewall to draw down on their specialist knowledge in the design and development of interventions to improve our ranking.

4. Financial and legal implications

- 4.1 There are no direct financial or legal implications from this report.

5. Risk Management

- 5.1 The risk implications arising from this report are detailed below:

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Reputational damage.	<p>The council's reputation as an employer who recognises and values equality and diversity, especially in the LGBTQ community could be damaged.</p> <p>Failing to be seen as a Stonewall Champion could dissuade members of the LGBTQ community from wanting to work at the council.</p>	The annual submission to Stonewall is managed through the council's Employee Engagement Team under the management of the Chief People Officer.	E4

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 That the Committee notes this report.

Lead officer contact

Carrie McKenzie
Chief People Officer
Telephone: 01634 332261
carrie.mckenzie@medway.gov.uk

Background papers:

None

Appendices:

None