

**Report to:** People Scrutiny Committee

**Date of meeting:** 15 July 2024

**By:** Director of Adult Social Care & Health

**Title:** Scrutiny Review of Equality and Inclusion in ASCH

**Purpose:** To provide the Committee with a six month update in respect of the action plan agreed upon the publication of the original Scrutiny review of our seldom heard people and communities in Adult Social Care

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The People Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:**

- 1. Comment and consider the progress being made against the agreed actions at Appendix 1.**
  - 2. Note further actions planned as part of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy 2024-27 and its accompanying Action Plan for 2024-25 in Appendices 2 and 3.**
  - 3. Agree to receive a further update report in six months' time.**
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## **1. Background Information**

1.1 In October 2023, Cabinet approved the report of Scrutiny Review Board on Equality and Inclusion in Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH). There were nine recommendations in the report. We submitted an Action Plan on the recommendations.

1.2 This report brings an update on steps taken in implementing the recommendations. R1, R4, R8 are closed; R2, R5 ongoing; and R3, R6, R7 are on track. More details can be found in Appendix 1.

## **2. Communication and Engagement**

2.1 We have shared information and key learning from this report with a range of audience and stakeholders; from our residents, people who access our care and support, our VCSE partners, our NHS partners, and other statutory partners, as well as staff across ESCC and in particular, in ASCH.

2.2 Sharing of this information has been through a range of mechanisms, including leaflets, newsletter items, presentations to teams and meetings, and design of workshops sharing the barriers and how to work creatively and effectively with people and communities whom we seldom hear from. Recommendations R1 and R3 have been about communication and engagement, and we have led a number of initiatives as detailed in Appendix 1. We have also included continuous engagement in our new EDI Strategy as detailed in Appendix 2.

2.3 The impact of this communication and engagement has been very positive and it is leading to deeper understanding of issues faced by seldom heard people and communities and has led to change in practice when people are engaging, planning service provision or planning a commissioning of service.

2.4 There is more planned and ongoing work to improve communication and inclusion of seldom heard people in the work we do, including our gypsy roma communities and our homeless population.

### **3. Inclusive by Design: ASCH's new EDI Strategy**

3.1 The Department has adopted new EDI Strategy titled *Inclusive by Design* for years 2024-27, along with an annual Action Plan. Both these reference and make clear our commitment to implement the recommendations and ensure that actions emanating from this work are embedded in the work of the department.

3.2 We have started a new EDI Data project which will help to identify gaps in delivery of our support and care options and how we engage, involve, and include all of our population.

### **4. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendations**

4.1 Inclusion of and focus on seldom heard people and communities is important in ensuring we respect diversity of our county and provide support and care to everyone. Taking steps to respond to barriers faced by people and communities we seldom hear from is important to the work of ASCH and through our EDI Strategy, we are making sure we mainstream actions from this review in our day-to-day work.

4.2 The recommendations from the Scrutiny Review have been embedded within the work of the Department and the Committee will continue to be provided with updates as projects progress.

4.3 A full update of the progress made on the Review recommendations are outlined in the Action Plan at Appendix 1.

**MARK STAINTON**

**Director of Adult Social Care & Health**

Officer Contact: Kaveri Sharma, Strategic Commissioner (Equality and Inclusion)

Email: [kaveri.sharma@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:kaveri.sharma@eastsussex.gov.uk)