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Date: 14th October 2020

Dear Mr Colburn,

**Re: Workplace Diversity and Inclusivity (Case Ref: EC3190)**

Thank you for your letter of 25 September. Sutton Council is committed to diversity and inclusivity and works towards greater equality in the workforce profile year on year. Our aim is to develop a workforce profile that broadly reflects the community we serve, at all levels in the council. We have made progress in this area, but we are continuing to focus on the areas which need improvement. I am able to provide a significant degree of detail in this letter, which reflects the attention that we pay to diversity and inclusivity:

- Sutton Council's workforce is made up of 26.24% black, asian and ethnic minority staff, our residents reflect 27.3%. The percentage earning over £50k has increased year on year since 2017/18 to 14.29% (at 31.3.20, this is the date of the figures quoted throughout this section as the current position, unless otherwise stated), but there is more to do to ensure that our workforce is represented at senior levels.
- 73.5% of our workforce is female, which is higher than the percentage of females living in the borough, which is 69%. 50.85% earning over £50k are female.
- The council has made positive steps during 2019 to decrease the gender pay gap and as of March 2019, the Council's mean pay gap is 9.3% (in favour of men). The Gender Pay Gap has decreased since 31 March 2018, when it was 14.6% and encouragingly the percentage of women in the upper quartile has also increased from 59% in March 2018 to 65% in March 2019.

- There is more work to do around disability, where staff declaring a disability have decreased from 6.2% in 2016/17 to 4.48% (under the borough profile of 6%), and of those earning over £50k, 1.2% declare a disability. A third of colleagues have not shared their disability status.
- 4.08% of our workforce are LGBTQ+, and 8.64% of those earning over £50k. Again, declarations are incomplete, a third have not shared their sexuality on iTrent.
- 6.28% of our workforce is aged 16-24, under the borough profile of 10%. The largest proportion of our staff are 45-54 (29.17%), and with 21.65% of our workforce being 55-64, half of our workforce is aged 45-64.

The Council has six equality staff network groups across the council, each with a senior manager sponsor, who are helping build awareness of the needs of all, ensuring fair and respectful treatment. These include BAME+Allies, LGBTQ+Allies, Youth Group+Allies, Women's+Allies, Family & Carers+Allies, Disability+Allies who all meet regularly. I chair the Equalities Champion Group which is attended by Equalities Champions from across the Council and Staff Network leads which meets quarterly to address strategic impact across all directorates.

In response to Black Lives Matters, the Leader and I held listening webinars with staff and as a result, and I commissioned the BAME network and senior managers to set up a working group focused over three areas: improving management capacity and confidence in supporting a diverse workforce; reviewing systems and structures for recruiting and supporting colleagues; and listening to and celebrating Sutton's diverse communities. Sutton's new recruitment system will offer improved reporting and anonymous application processes.

The Council has put in place a number of policies and actions to address gender equality in the workforce over the last year with the help and engagement of the Women's +allies staff network, to work to ensure there are no barriers to progression. A Carers policy has been developed with the carers staff network and an introduced an intranet page for all relevant links, including premature baby additional leave. In addition the 'Menopause guide' was launched on International Women's Day, and a Reproductive policy which covers all aspects of this broad subject has been developed in order to help support our staff.

The Council has achieved 'Disability Confident Committed' status which helps us recruit, retain and develop disabled colleagues and recognise the value they bring to the council and will work to achieve level 2 of the standard.

We continue to encourage staff to share their equalities characteristics on our HR system to improve the comprehensiveness of our reporting and monitoring.

I hear regularly from our staff networks and trade unions and make personal commitments to oversee any issues that may be raised. We are currently running council-wide staff 'pulse' surveys every three months and use this feedback from our staff to understand the effectiveness of our work, alongside organisational health indicators such as absence, grievance, disciplinary and recruitment statistics.

Our HR and Organisational Development Strategy for the next 3 years is being presented to Strategy and Resources committee in October 2020. Diversity and Inclusion is a strategic theme of the strategy, with a series of measures that we have discussed and agreed with our Strategic Directors, staff networks and trade unions.

The Council supports the work of the [Sutton Fairness Commission](#) which aims to improve equalities across the public sector. In addition to this the Council's approach to Equalities is set out in the [Sutton Equality and Diversity Framework 2019/20 - 2023/24](#). The principle tool the Council uses to ensure that service users are treated equally and fairly are Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs). EIAs are completed for new or changed services and ensure officers think about proposed policy and service changes and how they will disproportionately, positively or negatively impact anyone in the protected groups. It is the mechanism through which the council demonstrates compliance with the Equality Act 2010, Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 and Localism Act 2011. EIAs may be informed by consultation, national and local data and are reviewed at key decision points by elected members. They will also be published as part of committee papers. The Council also conducts Cumulative Impact Assessments to ensure that the overall impact of decision making does not have a disproportionate impact on protected groups.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Helen Bailey', is written over a horizontal line.

Helen Bailey  
Chief Executive