

<b>Meeting</b>	OLC Board	<b>Agenda Item No.</b> <b>Paper No.</b>	11 117.8
<b>Date of meeting</b>	14 December 2021	<b>Time required</b>	10 Minutes

<b>Title</b>	<b>ED&amp;I update</b>
<b>Sponsor</b>	Paul McFadden, Chief Ombudsman. Delivered by Nikki Sinclair, EDI Manager
<b>Status</b>	OFFICIAL
<b>To be communicated to:</b>	Members and those in attendance

<b>Executive summary</b>
The purpose of this paper is to provide a summary update of activities and progress around the 3 month action plan from July Board and other key EDI activities and advise of next steps for the development of the EDI Strategy and Equality Priority Objectives.
<b>Recommendation/action required</b>
Board are asked to <b>note</b> this EDI update.

# ED&I update

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In July 2021 the EDI manager updated the Board on key objectives delivered in the first two months since being post including developing key internal and external policies, building our internal and external relationships with staff networks and external EDI networks and getting a better understanding of the EDI data that LeO holds for our staff and our customers.

A 3 month plan of action was also set out around 4 key themes that are the foundation of developing and embedding the EDI agenda into LeO and building a culture of inclusivity into everything we do:

- Strategy & Policy
- Building our community
- Diversity & Inclusion training
- EDI Reporting

This paper provides an update of what has been achieved and what next steps for the final quarter of this year.

## Strategy & Policy

### Key highlights summarized below:

- Consulted during November & December with approximately 50 people from across the organisation. In total there were 6 focus groups, including 1 with each staff network. It gave staff the opportunity to share their experiences and opinions on what they perceived to be potential barriers in LeO around inclusion, progression, belonging and representation and also suggest key activities on where or what LeO should focus on to improve inclusivity
- The Equality Priority objectives have been shared with the focus groups and leadership team and agreed that these are relevant and proportionate. They are also aligned closely with supporting LeOs business plan and People Strategy
- Final draft of EDI steering group Terms of reference developed and the first steering group is scheduled for January. Key activities will include approval of equality impact assessments (EIAs), development of EDI strategy and Equality priority objectives and alignment of activities to embed EDI into LeO and support of corporate plans.
- EIA successfully embedded into business plan cycle, 1 EIA has been approved by Executive management 6 have been completed and a further 36 to be completed as part of our policy review programme.

- EDI considerations have been built into the interim celebrating Success Scheme to ensure all staff are considered equally regardless of grade, protected characteristic or working pattern. Application of the scheme is monitored using EDI data to ensure that the awards made are proportionate to the diversity of Leos workforce. The EDI manager has been included as part of the monthly moderation panel.

## **Building our Community**

- Continued to building on our engagement with the staff networks to build trust and confidence, the EDI manager and EDI Board sponsor has met with all networks to understand issues and potential barriers to inclusion. Each network now has an Executive Team sponsor assigned to ensure the networks goals are aligned with business strategy, provide strategic approach to overcoming challenges, championing change and identifying solutions to the barriers they face.
- Collaborated with Chief Executive of Ombudsman Association (OA) in developing this years Ombudsman association conference – *Strength through Diversity*. LeO also delivered a presentation on ‘How to recruit and induct remotely’ for the ‘Future of work’ session sharing lessons learned and how our process has evolved over the last 18 months. Positive feedback received from senior leaders of fellow ombudsman schemes include *‘it’s great to see LeO returning to the Ombudsman fold’*.
- Working closely with PHSO, we have successfully proposed the creation of an OA group for senior leaders focused on EDI for collaborative working. This meeting is scheduled for early part of next year and will be co chaired by LeO’s & PHSO EDI managers.
- Quarterly meetings scheduled with other EDI specialists across ombudsman sector and civil service incusing FOS, Highways and Ombudsman services to look at opportunities for collaboration. We will be piloting a joint approach with PHSO for Race Equality week in February 2022 sharing resource, engaging with networks and staff.
- Supported BAME network with celebration of Black History Month, including interview with Dale Simon (EDI Board Sponsor) and Head of Continuing Health Care for Black Country Clinical Commissioning Group as part of the ‘Proud to Be’ theme for 2021

## **Diversity & Inclusion Training**

- Commissioned Inclusive Leadership training for OLC Board and Executive Management team to be delivered to January 2022. Key aims of the workshop include:
  - Engage leadership in the rationale and importance of inclusion to delivering performance goals
  - Agree personal and organisational actions to develop and implement and inclusive culture
- New EDI induction session developed and delivered to 3 cohorts of new starters. The training has been received well; some positive feedback below;

- *Excellent engagement and EDI agenda explained in a very real and impactful way. Such an important topic critical to onboarding and often overlooked.*
- *Trainer was enthusiastic and passionate about the topic and was able to engage listeners easily. She was very good at explaining different issues from different points of view to help me understand how others can feel in certain situations. This is useful as some of the issues I have not personally experienced so it gave a good insight into how issues can affect others.*
- *Interactive, brought to life the importance. High energy levels and a clear passion for the subject was shown by the trainer*
- As part of the return to office process, the EDI manager and Knowledge and Learning Business Partner lead on commissioning and delivery of the well being workshops. There were 3 x 1 hour well being check in sessions to support our people following the pressures of the pandemic in both their working and personal lives. The evaluation of these sessions is now taking place and will act as a useful benchmark of well being at LeO and for feeding into our organisational strategy for well being in the future.
- Development of resource package and improving the process to support staff with managing our customer reasonable adjustment requests during the customer journey
- Joined Stonewall Diversity Champion Scheme in November and introductory meeting was held in early December to understand how they can provide support around improving inclusivity for staff and customers from the LGBTQ community.
- EDI Manager is a member of Association of Chief Executives (ACE) EDI Forum

### **ED&I reporting**

- Completed external benchmarks against Race at work Charter & Disability Confidence Scheme and have identified key activities for improvement to be included with the EDI action plan and People Strategy.
- Gender pay gap report 20-21 was submitted and published in October.

### **Priorities over next 3 months**

- Delivery of the Inclusive Leadership workshop in January for Board and Executive Management with the view to roll out an adapted version of inclusive leadership workshops across the organization that will enable LeO to reinforce learning and drive behaviour change for all our people.
- Update Board on the response to the consultation on the EPOs and the key themes and actions arising from the consultation and how they support and align with the Business plan and People Strategy in January. The final EDI Strategy will be presented to Board in March.
- Present TOR and update Board on introductory meeting for EDI steering group including clear governance framework for embedding EDI into LeO. The steering

group will start to ratify the EIAs and ensure that Leo are completing due diligence in their consideration of protected characteristics for new policies, processes and any major changes when policies, service delivery and processes are reviewed.

- Gender Pay Gap report 2021-22 final draft scheduled to be shared with OLC/ARAC in January ready for submission in March 2022
- All internal and external EDI datasets will be finalized alongside analysis of Civil service People Survey data to form a cohesive report for Board we will band governance, including changes to CMS and building of Power BI reporting
- Working with executive sponsors and Staff networks to identify key priorities and actions in relation to network specific issues. These will include activities like review of Race Action Plan, developing a robust process for workplace adjustment passports and working with Stonewall to maximizing workplace diversity.
- Working closely with HR recruitment Partner to collate recruitment data from the next recruitment campaign and develop a plan around improving attraction for a diverse workforce.

Board are asked to note the Inclusive leadership workshop where Board members will have input into development of EDI Strategy and action plan.

**Nikki Sinclair**

**LeO EDI Manager**