

TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Item No. 07

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE: 3 FEBRUARY 2014

SUBJECT: NORTH EAST EQUALITY AWARDS 2013

JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND THE PERSONNEL ADVISOR

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the results of the Authority's award nominations at the North East Equality Awards held in October 2013.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Equality North East is an independent company that works regionally and nationally to help achieve equality in employment, entry to employment and services. Each year they host the North East Equality Awards providing an opportunity to recognise and showcase organisations in the region that are excelling in this field.
- 2.2 The Authority is a long standing supporter for the awards which have been in existence for over a decade and has a track record of being selected as finalists, including being nominated by the judges for the Outstanding Practice Award in 2012.

3. NORTH EAST EQUALITY AWARDS

- 3.1 2013 is a particularly special year as the North East Equality Awards 10th Anniversary. The awards celebrated the success of past and present equality champions and showcased the excellent practices in equality and diversity in the North East of England.
- 3.2 The Authority submitted two nominations for the 2013 awards and was selected as finalists for both categories which included: Organisations Supporting Disabled People into Employment and Groups Who Have Made a Difference. Results were announced on 4th October 2013 at the awards ceremony.

4. NOMINATIONS

- 4.1 Groups who have made a difference award sponsored by Newcastle College - the Authority's LGBT Network Group was nominated for this award. The LGBT network group has been instrumental in improving the Authority's position in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, achieving the highest performing Fire Service in the country.
- 4.2 Organisations supporting disabled people into employment award sponsored Middlesbrough College - the Authority was nominated for this award for the positive equality

outcomes achieved for people with disabilities driven by the Authority's Disability network group. This work has had a major impact on disabled people in the world of work.

5. AWARDS WINNERS

- 5.1 The Chief Fire Officer is delighted to inform Members that the Authority was successful in achieving both awards. This is an outstanding achievement which recognises the commitment of Members and employees to ensuring equality for all and it is particularly encouraging to see both network groups recognised for their efforts.
- 5.2 Award judges believed that the work of the LGBT network group has had a major impact in improving LGBT equality and inclusion in the workplace, making a real difference for LGBT employees ensuring individuals are able to be themselves at work.
- 5.3 Judges also commented that enhanced engagement with the disabled community has raised awareness, increased disabled employees and given staff a better understanding of disability. The Authority was noted as having a wealth of projects, training initiatives and targets to ensure an accessible service is provided including opportunities for work experience for disabled people – and the judges commented 'real opportunities'.

6. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- 6.1 There are no financial implications in respect of this report.

7. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Participating in the above awards enables the Authority to gain recognition for the outstanding work being undertaken to ensure excellence in delivering equality continues to be achieved. The Authority's involvement also sends out a positive message to the public, partners, employees and other stakeholders of on-going commitment to equality for all.

8. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no health and safety implications in respect of this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Authority is recommended to:
 - a) Note the content of this report;
 - b) Receive further reports as appropriate.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The under mentioned Background Papers refer to the subject matter of the above report:

Equality Awards Update, HR Committee Report, 14 October 2014.

www.equality-ne.co.uk/projects/awards/2013Awards