

Report of the Assistant Director for the Office of the Chief Executive to the meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on Thursday 26 October 2017.

Subject:

Bradford Council's Equality Objectives Progress Report (January to June 2017)

Summary statement:

Following approval of the Council's new equality objectives at the end of 2016, this report provides the first annual progress report on the objectives covering January 2017 to June 2017.

Alison Milner
Assistant Director, Office of the Chief Executive

Report Contact: Kathryn Jones,
Strategy and Engagement Officer
Phone: (01274) 433663
E-mail: k.jones@bradford.gov.uk

Portfolio:

Corporate

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Corporate

1. SUMMARY

Following approval of the Council's new equality objectives at the end of 2016, this report provides the first annual progress report on the objectives covering January 2017 to June 2017.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Bradford District is a diverse and youthful area. We are the youngest city in the United Kingdom. We have an ever-changing population of over half a million people originating from all corners of the globe, creating a rich cultural mix. People from black, minority, ethnic backgrounds make up 36% of the total population and there are 153 languages spoken across the district. Our worldwide roots from current and historic migration, have allowed us to build a big economy with global reach. More than one-quarter (30.2%) of the district's population is aged less than 20. Bradford Council aims to serve and represent the whole district in all its diversity. The Council's goal is to ensure that every part of the district and everyone who lives in it is equitably served. No-one must feel excluded, and no-one unfairly favoured or disadvantaged.
- 2.2 The Council has legal responsibilities relating to equalities but these are a minimum requirement. There is understanding of the wider benefits of improving everyone's quality of life and our social responsibility. We therefore have set equality objectives that reflect and support this diversity and ensure we maximise the vibrancy and energy of the people we work for.
- 2.3 The Public Sector Equality Duty sets out a number of aims that public bodies should have regard to in their operation and is supported by some specific duties which include the requirement on public bodies to set and publish at least one specific and measurable equality objective at least every four years and to publish information on how they are complying with the Equality Duty annually.
- 2.4 In their operation public bodies should have regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 2.5 The defined set of protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010 are age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; and (in relation to discrimination) marriage and civil partnership. The Council's approach to equalities goes beyond this, by looking at equality more broadly and taking into account the impact of our decisions on people on low income or with a low wage.
- 2.6 As a baseline the Council's annual publication of its own workforce profile is presented at appendix 2 and also available on the [Bradford Council web site](#). This provides an annual status of the workforce's protected characteristics.

- 2.7 In September 2016 the Council's Executive approved a new set of equality objectives for Bradford Council. The ambition for the objectives was to be far more strategic and only capture a few key areas which the whole organisation can contribute to and that will have maximum impact on the district. By 2020 we want to be able to demonstrate how they have made a difference over and above the day to day equalities work which the Council undertakes. The objectives and therefore this progress report do not consequently try to capture all the equality activities the Council undertakes.
- 2.8 Since sign off in 2016 a milestone plan has since been developed to help deliver clear action in support of the objectives, with targets allocated as appropriate. Details of the approved objectives can be found on the [Bradford Council web site](#), which have been available since autumn 2016.
- 2.9 The equality objectives are embedded in to the Council Plan, thereby ensuring they remain central to the Council's work. The monitoring of the equality objectives also complements that of the Council Plan, with quarterly monitoring undertaken, and any exceptions considered by the Council Plan Delivery Board for a resolution. The Portfolio Holder for equalities is also provided with a regular briefing outlining progress.
- 2.10 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report in November 2015 as part of the consultation process in developing the objectives. The Committee also requested that they receive annual progress updates, as a means of providing oversight and scrutiny on the delivery of the actions supporting the objectives. This is therefore the first progress report the Committee is receiving on the new objectives, covering January to June 2017.
- 2.11 The equality objectives have been set for a four year period, 2016 to 2020. As such flexibility has been built in to the plan to allow shorter term actions to be completed and new actions identified in support of achieving each objective. The district is an ever changing place, and the resources available to the Council and partners continue to change. So whilst maintaining a four year commitment to each objective, the detail in how we realise them may vary as time progresses.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 Appendix 1 presents a detailed outline of progress against each of the equality objectives' supporting actions from 1 January 2017 when monitoring of the objectives commenced to the end of June 2017. The progress plan includes a breakdown of each action and milestone, progress on each, and where it was felt appropriate to set a target a latest figure or status is also included.
- 3.2 The following points provide the headlines and highlights of progress with each objective.
- 3.3 Community relations – ensure that the people of the district get on well together.
a) Encouraging and celebrating good community relations and active citizenship – promoting campaigns and opportunities to participate, raising awareness of 'cultural' events.

Highlights: The People Can campaign has been at the heart of encouraging and promoting citizen involvement in neighbourhoods and more volunteering within the district, leading to further investment being sought to maximise its potential across the district. Work with communities of interest continues as does the maximising of voter registration, both providing a means of increasing opportunities for people to participate in decision making.

- b) Hate and street crime – education programmes in schools, increasing reporting, reducing street based sexual harassment.

Highlights: A range of programmes have taken place in schools from interfaith education benefiting over 17,000 young people, to over 80 ambassadors being trained to deliver hate crime and Anne Frank history in schools. The focus on reducing hate crime has increased with additional reporting centres being set up, more training and support provided and celebratory events taking place across the district (LGBT History Month, International Women's Day and Pride).

- 3.4 Employment and skills – promote inclusive growth through ensuring those most disadvantaged in the labour market are able to get the skills they need and access good jobs.

- a) Poverty and ethnicity employment and skills programme - addressing barriers and blockages to employment and career progression for disadvantaged groups.

Highlights: In collaboration with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation a textile academy project has engaged 50 Asian women in Keighley into employment and opened up opportunities for more senior roles for them. A Council low paid employees project has led to 25% of participants progressing into higher paid employment.

- b) Apprenticeship programme – ensuring that the Council's new apprentices are representative of the district with a focus on Looked After Children and people with disabilities.

Highlights: The Council's new apprentices programme is now in place with a team assigned. This includes pre-apprenticeship pathways with the aim of getting 10% participation from looked after children and a further 10% from those with special education needs.

- 3.5 Organisational equalities culture – the Council is well run, fit for business and is fair and inclusive in its approach.

- a) Equalities competency and corporate approach – a wide ranging programme of equality competency activities and improved governance arrangements.

Highlights: New governance arrangements are now in place following a review and support from Departments and Corporate Management Team. A programme of staff engagement opportunities have been put in place including focus groups, road shows and lunchtime drop ins. Elected Member training is also in place including planning on a dementia awareness session for Autumn 2017.

- b) Workforce diversity – recruitment options, commissioning requirements, career progression options.

Highlights: A baseline has been established within the authority for race, gender and disability so far as a means of identifying whether interventions make a difference. Job vacancies are being made more accessible through jargon free job profiles and an improved web site in the first instance. Work shadowing opportunities have also been made available for minority

communities.

- c) Accessible services – Accessible Information Standard implemented in Health and Social Care, and extended to customer access points primarily through our customer services.

Highlights: The implementation of the Standard has progressed with a programme of training, guidance and tools for staff. Monitoring arrangements are also in place with Healthwatch to check on the success of this implementation.

- 3.6 Equality data – our data better provides us with the right insight, evidence and intelligence to make well informed decisions that impact on our communities.

- a) Equality monitoring – gathering more information on service users to better understand our service impacts.

Highlights: An updated equality monitoring form has been launched, along with new staff guidance. As such Council staff are being encouraged to collect more information on their customers to ensure services continue to be delivered in the right way to right people. This will also support the equality assessment of new policies and service changes.

- b) Use of the equality data and information – raising awareness of available information across the whole Council.

Highlights: Equality information can now be collected electronically, which will provide the opportunity for better reporting and information sharing.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

Delivery of the actions in support of the equality objectives will be met from existing resources.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

There are no significant risk management or governance issues arising out of the recommendations of this report.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

- 6.1 The Equality Act 2010 consolidated a wide range of equalities legislation that had until then been contained in separate statutes. Section 149 of the Act introduced a Public Sector Equality Duty which requires local authorities and other public bodies, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

- 6.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty is also supported by two specific duties requiring public bodies to set and publish at least one specific and measurable equality objective at least every four years and to publish information on how they are complying with the Equality Duty annually. This is set out in the Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance.

- 6.3 The Equality and Human Rights Commission oversees compliance within the statutory timescales. If the Council does not agree to set and publish the equality objective within required timescales, the Commission has powers to issue a compliance notice against the council and if non-compliance persists, seek an order from the County Court that instructs the council to comply with the Specific Duty.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

As suggested in this report it is important that the Council gives due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty in any decision making it undertakes. The Council will continue to undertake activity to ensure that equality is considered through the development and delivery of all its functions. In addition the equality objectives themselves will allow the Council to focus on a few key areas which will have maximum impact on the district and work with partners in their delivery. This will not be at the detriment of its other equality responsibilities.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no sustainability implications from the equality objectives.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

There are no gas emission impacts from the equality objectives.

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

The public sector equality duty explicitly states that public authorities must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation. This is therefore a fundamental element of the considerations that the Authority gives when assessing equality impacts on any changes to any of its functions. 'Community relations' is also one of the Council's equality objectives.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

There are no Human Rights Act impacts from the equality objectives.

7.6 TRADE UNION

Some of the actions supporting the equality objectives are in connection to the workforce, both in development, training and diversity. The Trade Unions will as such be kept up to date on the equality elements of the workforce development programme.

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

There will be no specific ward implications as the equality objectives will have district wide impact.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That Members comment on and support the progressing work on the Council's equality objectives 2016-2020.

- 9.2 That Members request a further progress update on the equality objectives in 12 months time

10. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 – Equality Objectives Detailed Progress Update January 2017 to June 2017.
- Appendix 2 – Bradford Council Equalities Workforce Profile (June 2016)

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Bradford Council's Equality Objectives - <https://www.bradford.gov.uk/your-council/equality-and-diversity/bradford-council-s-equality-objectives/>