

Report of the Assistant Director to the meeting of West Area Committee to be held on the 22nd September 2022

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Subject:

Equality Plan and Objectives and Plan 2021-25 update.

Summary statement:

This report is to update the West Area Committee of progress made through the Equality Plan and Objectives and any specific development in the West Area.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

This report is an update on the overall Equality Plan and Objectives and therefore is in relation to all the objectives.

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Portfolio:

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Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Corporate

1. SUMMARY

To update Bradford West Area Committee on progress with the current Equality Plan and Objectives 2021-25.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Bradford Council published its Equality Plan and Objectives in December 2020 to progress outcomes under the headings of leadership, workforce, communities and service delivery to meet our Equality Act duty within Bradford Council.
- 2.2 The Equality Act 2010 requires us to have Equality Objectives, which are monitored and refreshed every four years. The general equality duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.
- 2.3 Our Equality Objectives and Equality Plan set out both how we will meet our statutory obligations under this duty and how we plan to go further than those obligations. Creating a successful inclusive place also means recognising that inequality is complex and there are other causes of inequality and exclusion than just those characteristics protected by law.
- 2.4 The Equality Objectives and Equality Plan adopt a whole Council and whole district approach and therefore do not target specific geographic areas. However, there are pieces of work which take place at locality level creating a specific offer to each area.

2.4 Leadership

This objective aims to address the overall approach the Council takes in its approach to Equalities ensuring it is at the heart of all its decision making and provides opportunities for everyone in the district to achieve their full potential.

Embedding Equality at the heart of all the Council does has been evident in work it has undertaken. This includes the Council Plan with Equalities as a key cross-cutting principle informing all activity. The Council has also led the development of a District Plan which has equality as a fundamental guiding principle.

The leadership of the Council have made a commitment to the organisation to increase visibility of senior management to listen to our workforce with lived experience of protected characteristics. Senior leadership have committed to being sponsors of the staff networks within the Council. Each staff network has one or in some cases two sponsoring directors providing them with senior leadership support and a direct reach to senior leadership with their ideas,

perspectives and challenges.

Staff graded at Special A and above have a commitment to have at least one Equality Objective in their appraisal. These have now been set currently with 83% of senior staff with an equality goal in place. These are being monitored through one to ones and appraisals.

The Council has committed to ensuring decision making is informed by engagement, consulted on appropriately and communicated clearly and underpinned by evidence. The initial stages of this work are in place with Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) training and a programme of support activities including training and development of EIA champions.

In August 2021 the Equalities Lead Officer worked with colleagues from the local NHS to deliver the “Root out Racism” launch event in City Park. This was attended by over 300 people who came together to make a public stand against racism. The event received very positive coverage and good reach in the media and social media and the planning group is continuing to meet throughout the year to progress this campaign and learning area.

A district wide systems equality group has been set up which is meeting regularly for programme oversight of EDI and resulting actions across the district. The Cross Council Equality Group has been developed over the past twelve months with seven staff networks emerging as members who meet with Departmental Champions and wider Council officers involved. They have oversight of the current Council Equalities plan and its progress.

This year has seen the staff network groups grow and develop. Staff network groups include the Race Equality Staff Network, BME Women’s Staff Network, Women’s Network, Disability Staff Network, LGBTQ Staff Network, Young People Staff Network and Working Carers Staff Network.

An app has been designed for Network Members developed by the LGBTQ+ Staff Network to share information, updates on views and opinions. The Disability Network Action Plan has now been drafted and shared with key senior managers and work is ongoing, including with HR, to implement actions.

Bradford District Wellbeing Board has shown commitment to equality as a top priority with an Equality Partnership Board and priorities which are being developed following the appointment of a new System Diversity Lead under the Wellbeing Board.

Bradford Council is contributing to the development of the districtwide and West Yorkshire wide EDI work as key contributors in both these arenas. This includes the WY wide EDI network of local authorities in West Yorkshire, and in work being developed by the EDI lead for Bradford District and EDI systems leads’ network.

Elected members approved a significant investment to enable the work on equalities and engagement. The appointment of the Equalities Lead Officer in June 2021 has resulted in a number of actions highlighted within this

report. The Lead Officer is in the ongoing process of meeting with department managers to discuss equalities and provide support and challenge. This includes providing updates through the Cross Council Equalities Group meetings to feed back through departmental champions.

The Cross Council Equalities Group meets monthly chaired by the Assistant Director Office of the Chief Executive. The group includes Network Chairs and Departmental Equalities Champions. The Champions are the point of contact between the Equalities Group (who oversee the delivery of the plan), and departments. Members of the group have supported a number of recruitment processes and have developed the RESPECT campaign which was launched in May 2022.

The RESPECT campaign has been highly successful so far recruiting over 500 allies and with a further 600 plus people taking part in training around equalities and inclusion of each protected characteristic. This training is being offered to all staff and is included on the online Evolve training system for staff personal development.

The Council have undergone an 'Equalities Peer Review' from the Local Government Association in November 2021 which resulted in a final report early spring 2022. This has enabled the Council to identify areas of progress, and where development is needed as well as enabled learning from best practice in other areas. The review has recommended a refresh of Council equality objectives in line with the Council plan which is in the process of being completed.

The current refresh of the plan has included several participation sessions across the district with staff and wider partners to gather their views on the current plan. This feedback has been taken on board along with wider recommendations from Stonewall and the Disability Action Group and in discussion with the Corporate Council Management Team and the Cross Council Equality Group. A draft plan has now been circulated for comment before a final draft is presented to Council Executive and Overview and Scrutiny.

Equalities is a standing item on all Council Management Team agendas and Formal Committee reports are required to have a front page summary of equality Implications and how these meet our Equality Objectives

2.5 Workforce

This objective aims to ensure all employees feel equal and included and comfortable in who they are. That they are supported to achieve their potential and are not subject to any unfair disadvantage regardless of their background, protected characteristic and class and are representative of the communities they serve.

A review of grievances is underway which is showing that these are reducing alongside the processing times. Bradford Council's HR Advisory Service continues to proactively advise and guide managers and Investigating Officers on the efficient management of all grievance processes. This has led to a reduction in the overall time taken for each grievance to be resolved from 208 days in Q1 of 2022/23 to just

103 days in Q2 of 2022/23. HR are also in the process of updating the Council's Grievance Procedure, to ensure that it remains robust, streamlined and continues to be legally compliant allowing all staff recourse to have their concerns investigated.

Since quarter 4 of 2021/22, there has been a significant decrease in the number of grievance cases being raised by employees within BMDC. 11 grievance cases were opened within Q2 2022/23.

There is a new programme being developed by workforce development which includes specific training on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. The Council is working with a delivery partner who are expert in improving employee engagement, organisational fitness and equality diversity and inclusion to deliver an employee survey that is supported by software and analytics that will deliver meaningful insights and intelligence. An employee survey has been designed, developed and tested over the summer of 2022 involving individuals from across the Council in advance of a Council-wide launch. The questions are research driven and extensive designed to deliver better data insight and intelligence of employee experience so that evidence based actions can be progressed accordingly

There has been a roll out of the Allyship programme with 427 staff signed up as Allies. The launch of the RESPECT SharePoint site for information, resources and communication on equalities took place in Inclusion Week 2021 and is being updated in Inclusion Week 2022.

We have undergone the roll out of the RESPECT e-learning, with 670 people already having undertaken this training. RESPECT Allyship training is in development for Elected Members following the success of staff training.

There has been an increase of 14 percent over 12 months of staff completing the Equalities Induction; this now stands at 65 percent of staff having completed this induction.

HR has launched the Cultural Competency training as part of a wider programme of equalities related workforce development.

HR continue to work towards streamlining and refining our current recruitment and selection processes. Current recruitment/employee lifecycle processes are being process mapped with the intention of identifying areas of improvement for candidates and managers and to implement more streamlined and efficient processes. Options are also being explored in relation to the implementation of a new recruitment system and contract administration system, which will offer greater functionality, user experience, compatibility with other HR systems and access to a full suite of management information.

Elected members have approved a considerable fund, for the learning and development needs of Council staff in line with the actions set out in the Equality Plan. The Learning and Development plan includes a suite of initiatives aimed at supporting staff. Equalities and challenging inequality are a key part of how these programmes are being developed. Training has already focused on tackling racism, misogyny and discrimination towards LGBTQ communities.

Online equalities training has now been made mandatory for all new starters to the organisation. This sets a clear expectation to new starters that equalities are important to the organisation and they must seek to understand and address the underlying issues, however further training resources and opportunities will need to be developed.

A Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme has now been put in place in the workforce strategy with equalities as a major strand. The Equalities Working Group have committed to producing lived experience videos to be used as part of CPD.

In the spirit of fair and transparent recruitment, all recruitment panels are now more diverse and representative. HR have also provided staff teams with guidance and support in being able to achieve this.

Currently, more than 20% of staff at Special A and above are from BME backgrounds. This includes two senior managers appointed at grade Special C and above in 2021 and a new Strategic Lead for Systems Equality, Diversity and Inclusion as highlighted. The overall proportion of senior managers from BME backgrounds has increased over the last 12 months.

The Allyship programme has been launched which provides a structured programme of training and support for all staff enabling them to be effective allies to colleagues who identify with a particular protected characteristic. This programme has had input from our staff networks and community partners such as Race Equality Network and MESMAC.

The RESPECT campaign launched this year is the overarching campaign that addresses and supports all staff and all protected characteristics in placing a positive emphasis on attitudes and behaviours for everyone. The campaign and the Allyship programme are the result of a collaboration between the Staff Networks, policy, HR and communications colleagues.

2.6 Communities

This objective actively encourages all service areas to better understand our communities. The council will actively engage with our communities to help people participate in decision-making processes, to improve the services we provide, and to enable more people to take part in the life in the District.

The Black Lives Matter movement prompted a local, independently led review of statues and monuments to be undertaken. This has been carried out and the outcomes and recommendations have been reported to the Council's Executive. Executive have required officers to ensure that policies for new monuments, commemoration and honouring individuals and groups are diverse and inclusive and agreed that a second phase of work should focus on telling the untold stories of the District's diverse communities. This work is on-going through the 'Diversity in the public realm group' and support for Black History Month.

To better understand working with diverse groups and sharing of the experiences of staff, service users and projects, the council will be profiling this in Inclusion Week 2022. This is a week of activities which provides many learning opportunities for staff in different ways in which Inclusive working is addressing inequalities. This programme includes events from both our internal teams and external partners.

The Council is committed to reducing the level of hate crime experienced by diverse communities. A new Hate Crime Strategy was launched in October 2021. It was supported by University of Bradford research on Hate Crime reporting; which was commissioned by the Stronger Communities programme Bradford For Everyone.

During Islamophobia Awareness Month we worked with partners including Bradford Hate Crime Alliance to develop a local campaign for Islamophobia Awareness Month called #IAMBradford.

Staff training has taken place on community tensions through work with Bradford for Everyone and area based partners. Hate crime is decreasing following work from Hate Crime Alliance and work with Stronger and Safer Communities.

The Council have published an economic recovery plan prioritising those most affected by the pandemic - There is significant evidence that the COVID pandemic has had a greater economic impact on those with protected characteristics, who are more likely to work in the sectors most affected. This includes BME communities, women, younger adults and people on low incomes in more insecure work. In line with the District Economic Strategy, the recovery plan aims to drive actions that specifically target under-represented groups and specific areas of deprivation. It will also address underlying historical labour market disparities and improve workforce diversity ensuring greater economic participation and opportunity.

The Council approved £50K budget investment to support Financial Inclusion, and an additional £600K investment for Assistant Ward Officer recruitment to support and engage with communities across the District has been carried out.

Procurement routes for communities are being improved with a social value procurement strategy that has a target for local spend which is being implemented through Corporate Services procurement and partners.

Over the last year we have worked with partners to develop the Welcome to Bradford website. This approach provided information for anyone new to the district and supported the settlement of Ukrainian families who have relocated to Bradford district about local services. Information is translated into the main languages spoken in the district by people who use English as a Second Language.

Skills House has set up the English Speakers of Other Languages HUB to provide advice and gather a needs analysis of English language learning in Bradford District. A large number of courses have been funded and supported by the hub to improve both English language levels and health and wellbeing outcomes working with public health.

Ukrainian resettlement has been supported during the past year work has been

supported through Access to Housing and with Stronger Communities .The EU Settlement Scheme was completed during the last year as we worked with local communities and partners to ensure people from the EU have completed their Settled Status to regulate their immigration status.

Through the Linking Network we have worked with local schools across Bradford linking schools and promoting social mixing, including 21 in the West Area.

Bradford Council have worked with local area police teams to engage people from protected characteristics including women, young people, migrants and people from faith communities.

Involving communities in decision making is taking place through the Stronger Communities ambassadors programme with inclusion of people from diverse backgrounds across all local areas of Bradford District. This includes representation on the Stronger Communities Partnership board.

Stronger Communities are working on a programme of training to develop understanding and responses to community tension working with partners and with communities across localities within Bradford District. This included funding Community Action Bradford and District to support community voice.

Safer and Stronger Communities worked with Bradford Hate Crime Alliance and Police to identify 2000 hate incidents. The Police and Crime Commission Survey recorded people feeling safe in their neighbourhood rising from 73% in 2019 to 78% in 2021. A new Hate Crime Strategy was launched in November 2021.

Stronger Communities having been focused on increasing social mixing through their Bradford For Everyone programme. The Police Crime Commissioner surveys from 2019 –2021 show an increase from 45.7% to 58.1% on the indicator of how well people from different backgrounds get on together in their local area, which is more than a 10% increase.

Programmes of celebration of diversity in place has involved departments within the Council working together to promote and support events which has included Root Out Racism, Pride, South Asian History Month, Windrush memorial, Black History Month, and Disability History Month.

Stronger Communities published the findings from their Bradford For Everyone programme in May 2022 which highlights learning to improve cohesion outcomes including a focus equality, diversity and inclusion in the areas of employment, education, social mixing and feeling safe in Bradford District.

A team of five Community Engagement Officers have been recruited in September 2022 to the Stronger Communities team to develop links with area partners to promote inclusion working with people from all protected characteristics based on learning from the Bradford For Everyone programme.

In December 2021 the Council worked with partners from the public and voluntary sector using an asset based approach to produce a European Roma Strategy to involve Roma people and support Roma inclusion across Bradford District with a

focus on Equality.

The council have completed a Gypsy and Traveller Strategy for inclusion of people from the Gypsy and Traveller Communities working internally across departments.

Bradford Council became a Local Authority of Sanctuary in December 2021 which included an action plan for involving people from the refugee and wider migrant community in the work and services of Bradford Council.

Stronger Communities' worked with Bradford Hate Crime Alliance to run a Let's Talk About It course focused on white people becoming anti-racist and working together to put in place support to unlearn racism and create allies.

The 'Make Sure It Adds Up' anti-rumour and critical thinking strategy involved working with partners to reduce rumours and prejudice. It supported people from across the District to practice and promote critical thinking when receiving and sharing uncertain information. The critical thinking campaign area worked with people from Muslim, LGBTQ+, working class and migrant communities to reduce hate crime and incidents and increase understanding around these diverse areas. The campaign was also used to tackle Covid-19 inequalities. This learning project, working with partners including: City of Sanctuary, Linking Network, Bradford African Community, Hope Not Hate, Integrated Community Learning Schools, Bradford Rohingya Community and Community Action Bradford & District, ran training courses in a range of settings involving 600 people across the District. Nearly 90 percent of those who have taken the course said it directly gave them a further understanding of diversity and just under 80 percent said they had less negative personal beliefs as a result of the course.

Promoting inclusive activity and a feeling of belonging is key to the cohesion work of the Bradford for Everyone team. The innovative Citizen Coin app enables people to earn virtual coins for undertaking social value activities, such as volunteering. People can 'spend' their earned coins at an increasing number of local retailers and businesses to receive discounts against goods and services. The app's technology records all volunteering activities, helping those who need it to build their CVs which will support them gain paid employment and or get into better jobs. By July 2022, the scheme sees approximately 1540 active app users (receiving and spending coins) with 7678 coins in circulation across the district.

Bradford District Shared Values which are to Respect, Share, Care, Protect, is a people-led campaign that inspires and aspires to get all communities and organisations in the Bradford District to live and celebrate these four human values that bring us together. Over 1000 people living in the district, said having a set of shared values that belong to all, will connect us more, help us grow, shine and create the future we want to experience.

Bradford's People Library has been created as a collection of 'human books' highlighting the many things we have in common as people, as well as celebrating our differences. The library showcases inspiring stories which are from people who were born and bred here, or those newly arrived. People participate in creating the library from all parts of the district.

The African Study for Change course worked with partners to run African history education classes within the Council and for wider employers in the district to help promote outcomes to make Bradford District a place where everyone feels safe. The course aims were to increase understanding and reduce prejudice toward people who are black or of African heritage. This included an approach of decolonising with education that reflects the story of all citizens with a diverse global narrative. The course enabled people to learn about African History from a broader perspective and not a UK only perspective. The aim was to learn about events and characters not traditionally learnt about in schools and education in the UK. The result was outstanding, with 87% of participants stating they felt they were less prejudiced toward black people and people of African heritage.

The work led by Holiday Activity and Food programme has been supporting the most disadvantaged communities across the Bradford district in terms of low incomes. Working with 106 providers, 14,000 children attended the holiday clubs in parks across the district for 42 days over the summer period.

2.7 Service Design

To design, commission and deliver services that are accessible, inclusive and responsive to the needs of people and communities. To provide information about services in a range of accessible formats so that people know what services are available to support them and how to access them.

To aim to contract and commission locally wherever possible so that we can support our local economy. This will help to build a local supply chain connected to its wider social responsibilities and offering high-quality employment and training opportunities to local people, while delivering equitable services that are value for money.

The Council have produced an easy read guide to ensure everyone can access the Equality Plan and Objectives.

Bradford Council website now meets accessibility standards and has a translation facility while a full review of the website has been undertaken and training for staff is being put in place.

In order to collect data that will enable the measuring and effective evidence building a task and finish group developed a 'minimum data set requirement' for services in order to better understand their user profile and any gaps. Its roll out will ensure that consistent data is being collected across the Council, and among commissioned services.

The Council is committed to improving the way it works to serve the communities of Bradford District with its partners in the VCS. New co-production standards and governance are now in place in partnership with the voluntary sector to hear and act upon the voices of service users and carers including those from diverse backgrounds, older people, carers and disabled people. A coproduced piece of work in Adult Services, working with disabled people and their advocates is being piloted.

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) training programme has been developed with an EIA process review underway through the Equality Team. The training has been delivered in four sessions and a further 4 sessions are planned between September and December.

There has been a review of the EIA process which is underway through the Lead Equality Officer. The Equality team and policy team have supported the EIA process for the budget proposals 2021/22 ensuring due consideration for all protected characteristics and low income groups.

We have adopted the accessible information standard and working towards implementing this throughout the Council.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Since the publication of the Equality Plan and Objectives in 2020 we have undergone a Peer Review by the Local Government Association. We have also had a review of our Equalities work by Stonewall in relation to working with people from the LGBTQ community and wider feedback from the Disability Staff Network through their action plan. This has integrated and informed a current refresh of the plan which is in its final stages before being presented to the Council.

Following the Local Government Association peer review recommendations presented to Bradford Council in early 2022 we have consulted with all council staff and related partners to gather feedback to include in the recommend refresh of the Equalities Objectives and Equality Plan. This process has resulted in aligning our objectives with our overall Council Plan objectives and developing outcomes and measures to increase equality, diversity and inclusion across the council and incorporating all previous content under our leadership, workforce, service delivery and work with communities.

The current draft of the plan is based on discussion with staff through open invites on BradNet and an all staff consultation email, as well as through the Staff Networks. The plan has been discussed and changes followed up with the Cross Council Equality Group, which includes Staff Networks and Department Champions, and we have held sessions throughout the district with our voluntary and community sector partners.

The redrafted plan has then been fed back to those involved in the refresh process and a final draft is to be discussed with elected members and unions before making final changes and being taken to Overview and Scrutiny and Council Executive.

The current refreshed objectives sit under the following headings.

- Objective 1: An equal, diverse and inclusive workplace
- Objective 2: Inclusive and accessible services
- Objective 3: An inclusive economy
- Objective 4: Inclusive Communities

Key changes to the Equalities Objectives and Equality Plan currently include;

- In relation to recommendation three to 'refresh the current Equality Objectives and Equality Plan' and on the basis of the feedback received from the wide consultation and engagement activities, the objectives now include and reflect these views.
- As per recommendation one to 'develop a more balanced narrative around equality' we have tried to create a plan that recognised all protected characteristics and in particular the work we need to do to on disability and LGBTQ+ inclusion.
- Also in relation to recommendation one, during our refresh and in relation to a balanced report we have also taken account of and considered documents like the Council Plan, Bradford District shared values, disability delivery plan, Stonewall feedback.
- In relation to recommendation four to 'publish an Equality Objectives and Action Plan that directly link to each Corporate Plan' the objectives areas remain broadly the same, and 'Inclusive economy' has been added, which responds to feedback from the peer review in aligning with key document's i.e. the Council plan.
- Also to add in relation to recommendation four, although leadership is no longer a separate objective, its cross cutting outcomes have been moved into the other four objectives and remain a priority with clear targets.
- Overall, we are currently working on the measures of the deliverables and this will be an ongoing piece of work linking the deliverables to the delivery plans of the departments in the Council
- Below is an expansion of our progress in relation to each of the recommendations of the LGA review:

Peer review outcomes

Recommendation 1 - Develop a more balanced narrative around equality, particularly improving the council's approach to equality on sexual orientation, gender, disability, and other characteristics that may or may not be legal protected, including low income. This will provide explicit recognition of the intersectional nature of inequality. It should also ensure you can provide a clearer narrative and set of actions and outcomes, feeding into decision-making and service design.

- There has been the development of a cross council approach to equalities through the RESPECT programme which covers all protected characteristics.
- There has been a wide set of staff networks created which includes seven current staff networks.
- Training is underway through the Allyship programme, including on intersectionality such as BME Women.

Recommendation 2 - Consider the Equality Lead reporting directly to the Chief Executive to demonstrate the importance and commitment to the agenda.

- Regular meetings with the Equality Lead and the Chief Executive have been increased.
- Equalities is on the CMT agenda every week with each report highlighting how they meet equality objectives and taking account of any EIA carried out on reports that are presented

Recommendation 3 - Refresh the current “Equality Objectives and Equality Plan” document to focus explicitly on the internal corporate equality health of the organisation.

- Programme of consultation has taken place with staff, networks and wider partners.
- Refreshed Plan drafted and going to Executive following further feedback from elected members and union members.

Recommendation 4 - Publish Equality Objectives and Action Plan that directly link to each Corporate Plan priority and include community-focused outcomes. Link the Corporate Plan explicitly to Service Delivery Plans, Team plans and Personal Development Plans. Ensure that it is clear how equality objectives will be delivered, by whom and how they will be resourced. This should be done as a matter of urgency.

- The refreshed plan has been drafted to meet recommendations from the LGA review.
- The refreshed plan takes into account and is aligned with the Council Plan, the feedback from the Stonewall report and also the Disability staff network action plan
- All services have been asked to put equality objectives into service planning through Departmental commitments.
- All staff Special A grade and above have an equality objective.

Recommendation 5 - Increase the capacity of the council to work on the EDI agenda by explicitly expanding policy officers’ remits to include equality (in the broad way defined in recommendation 1).

- Additional resource has been given for a dedicated equalities project officer.
- Training has been provided for all policy officers in EIAs.
- The council has co-funded a system EDI lead for the Wellbeing Board.

Recommendation 6 - All people managers to attend mandatory equality training, particularly about making reasonable adjustments for disabled staff.

- There has been an increase of 14 percent on last year of staff completing the Equalities Induction; this now stands at 65 percent of staff having completed this induction.
- There has been a roll out of the Allyship programme with 427 staff signed up as Allies.

- There has been a launch of the Cultural Competency training as part of a wider programme of equalities related workforce development.

Recommendation 7 - Publish workforce equality data, referring to how the workforce reflects local communities, particularly LGBTQ+ and disabled communities.

- HR are gathering data to ensure that this recommendation is achieved and our workforce matches the local community demographics.
- The annual Council Workforce Profile for 2022 is currently being produced and is due to be published into the public domain by 31 December. Although previous versions of this report did not include information on the proportion of the workforce that are from the LGBTQ+ communities, this will be added to the information on the other protected characteristics that is already included, as well as the latest information on all protected characteristics for the District's working age population from the Census. It is voluntary for employees to disclose their protected characteristics information and for LGBTQ+ in particular the response rate from our employees is very low, with a high proportion of employees saying they do not want to disclose this information to their employer. When the latest Census data is published for the District, this will be used for comparative purposes with our own organisation.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

There are no financial issues arising from this report which is for updating on progress purposing only.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

There are no significant risks arising out of the implementation of the proposed recommendations. This report is for updating on progress purposing only.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

There are no legal issues. This report is for updating on progress purposes only.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

This report is for updating on progress purposes only.

7.2 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

This report is for updating on progress purposes only.

7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

This report is for updating on progress purposes only.

7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

This report is for updating on progress purposes only.

7.5 TRADE UNION

This report is for updating on progress purposes only.

7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

This plan is for the whole council and therefore operates district wide with each action above impacting upon the West Area.

Consultation took place in the West Area on the Current Plan as part of the refresh taking place. Meetings were held in City Hall for all staff and staff networks.

A number of events have taken place in the West Area to raise awareness of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. These have included Remembering Srebrenica, LGBTQ+ Pride events, Holocaust Memorial, Open Iftar, the Queens Jubilee and number of other well attended and positive community events supporting programmes such as Black History Month and South Asian Heritage Month.

The Bradford Literature Festival returned with a wider ranging and diverse programme of learning events taking place in the West Area.

Assistant Ward Officers have been employed in the West Area to support local area offices to engage and support our diverse communities in their locality working with partners.

Stronger Communities have recruited area based engagement officers to involve people from all protected characters and all areas in the development and achievement of local community outcomes working with the VCS sector.

7.7 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS

This ongoing work contributes to inform the delivery of the overall West Area action plan working with wider departments including Area Officers and Stronger Communities.

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

This report is for updating on progress purposes only.

7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

This report is for updating on progress purposes only.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None.

9. OPTIONS

This report is to update the committee on progress and to either welcome or not welcome this update following further questions.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee welcome the update.

11. APPENDICES

Current Equality Objectives and Plan 2021-25.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Current Equality Objectives and Plan 2021-25.