

## Report of the Assistant Director, Chief Executive's Office to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on the 10 November 2022.

T

---

### Subject:

Equality Objectives and Equality Plan 2021-25 update.

### Summary statement:

This report is to update Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the progress made in relation to implementation of actions within the current Equality Objectives and Equality Plan 2021-25.

### EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

This report is an update on implementation against actions in the Council's Equality Objectives and Equality Plan 2021-25 and its related work areas, therefore this update is relevant to, and in relation to, all the Council's equality objectives.

---

Assistant Director, Office of the Chief Executive, Jenny Cryer

**Portfolio:**

Leader/Cllr Jabar

Report Contact: Khalida Ashrafi  
Phone: 07816082796

**Overview & Scrutiny Area:**

E-mail: [Khalida.ashrafi@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:Khalida.ashrafi@bradford.gov.uk)

Corporate

## 1. SUMMARY

To update on progress made against actions within the current Equality Objectives and Equality Plan 2021-25 and related areas of work, while recognising that all work carried out by Bradford Council has to show consideration of its impact on equality objectives.

## 2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Bradford Council's Executive approved the Equality Objectives and Equality Plan 2021-25 in December 2020. The Plan then being published and launched in April 2021. The plan was arranged under the outcome headings of: 1. Leadership, 2. Workforce, 3. Communities, and 4. Service delivery, with the overall aim of ensuring the Council met its duties under the Equality Act 2010, in both a general and specific sense as a local authority.

2.2 The Equality Act 2010 requires all local authorities, including Bradford Council, to have equality objectives which are monitored and refreshed every four years. The general equality duty under Section 149 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.

The Council has a responsibility to publish information to demonstrate its compliance with the duty imposed by S149 of the Equality Act 2010, and to publish equality objectives and gender pay gap information relating to its employees under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017. In summary, the Council is required to:

1. Publish gender pay gap information
  2. Publish information to demonstrate its compliance with the general equality duty
  3. At least once every four years, prepare and publish one or more equality objectives that it believes it needs to achieve to further any of the aims of the general equality duty. These objectives are required to be specific and measurable.
- 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. Therefore, recognition is given that 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 2021-25 adopted a whole Council and whole District approach, and therefore did not target specific geographic areas. However, there are pieces of work which take place at locality level creating a specific offer to each area based on the needs of that area.

## 2.5 Leadership -Visibility, leadership, and accountability

**We will lead the Council and the District in an open, visible and accountable way with zero tolerance for discriminatory behaviour.**

### **Strategic level opportunities and influence:**

Embedding equality at the heart of all the Council does is shown in each formal report to Council committees to show how services meet equality objectives, as well as within the Council Plan, which has Equalities as a key cross-cutting principle informing all activity.

The Council has led the development of the District Plan which has equality as a fundamental guiding principle.

The leadership of the Council have committed the organisation to increasing the visibility of its senior management listening to their workforce who have lived experience within one or more protected characteristics. Staff networks meet with CMT to discuss and feedback on achievements and challenges on a six weekly basis.

Senior leadership have also committed to being sponsors of all the self-directed Staff Networks within the Council. Each Staff Network currently has one or two sponsoring directors providing them with senior leadership support, and a direct reach to senior leadership with their ideas, perspectives and challenges.

Equalities is a standing item on all Corporate Management Team meetings regarding all equality implications and how these meet our Equality Objectives

### **Staff Networks:**

Staff Networks include the Race Equality Staff Network, BME Women's Staff Network, Women's Voices Network, Disability Staff Network, LGBTQ Staff Network, Young People Staff Network and Working Carers Staff Network. This year has seen the Staff Networks grow and develop.

The LGBTQ+ Staff Network has launched an app which has been designed for network members to share information as well as give updates on views and opinions.

The Disability Staff Network Action Plan has now been drafted and shared with key senior managers, and work is ongoing, including with Human Resources, to implement delivery of agreed actions.

### **Strategic EDI networks and groups:**

A Cross Council Equality Group has been set up which is meeting regularly, chaired by the Assistant Director of Office of the Chief Executive Department, for

programme oversight of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and resulting actions across the Council. The Cross Council Equalities Group meets six-weekly.

The Cross Council Equality Group has been developed over the past twelve months. Its membership has been drawn from the seven Staff Networks, the departmental equality champions, and wider Council officer involvement.

The Departmental Equality Champions are the point of contact between the Cross Council Equality Group and departments.

Members of the Cross Council Equality Group have supported a number of recruitment processes and have developed the RESPECT campaign which was launched in May 2022.

The Bradford District Wellbeing Board has shown commitment to equality as a top priority with an Equality Partnership Board. Its priorities are being developed following the appointment of a new Strategic Equality, Diversity and Inclusion lead, and overseen by the Council in partnership with other members of the Wellbeing Board.

Bradford Council is contributing to the development of district-wide and West Yorkshire-wide equality, diversity and inclusion work as key contributors in both of these arenas. This includes the West Yorkshire-wide Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Network of local authorities in West Yorkshire, and in work being developed by the Strategic Equality, Diversity and Inclusion lead for Bradford District and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Systems Leads' Network.

In August 2021 the equalities lead officer led, with colleagues from the National Health Service, the "Root out Racism" launch event in Bradford 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. The planning group is continuing to progress this campaign and resulting learning areas.

#### **Championing EDI with our staff:**

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.

Staff graded at Special A and above have a commitment to have at least one Equality Objective in their appraisal. These are now being set with 83 percent of senior staff holding an equality goal. 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 is in place with Equality Impact Assessment training and a programme of support activities including training and development of Equality Impact Assessment champions for each department.

Elected members approved a significant investment to enable further work on equalities and engagement. The appointment of the Council's 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 departments' managers to discuss equalities and provide support and challenge. This includes providing updates through the Cross Council Equality Group meetings, to be fed back to departments through their Departmental Equality Champions.

**Local Government Association – Equalities Peer Review:**

The Council underwent an Equalities Peer Review by the Local Government Association in November 2021; their final report being provided in early spring 2022. This is included as a background report. 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 recommended a refresh of the Council's Equality Objectives and Equality Plan 2021-25 in line with the Council Plan. This refresh is underway.

The 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 the Stonewall submission and the Disability Staff Network, and in discussion with the Corporate Council Management Team and the Cross Council Equality Group. The draft refreshed plan is also presented in a separate report to this meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their consideration, with the final draft due to be presented to Council Executive in December for their approval.

## **2.6 Workforce**

**We will work proactively to ensure that our workforce (at all levels) reflects the communities we serve and support all staff to achieve their full potential.**

**Training and development:**

Elected Members approved funds for the learning and development needs of Council staff in line with the actions set out in the Equality Objectives and Equality Plan 2021-25. 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 taken place which has focused on tackling racism, misogyny and discrimination towards LGBTQ communities.

A new programme is being developed by Human Resources Workforce Development which includes specific training on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Human Resources have launched Cultural Competency training as part of a wider programme of equalities related workforce development.

Online equalities training has now been made mandatory for all new starters to the Council. 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. Further training resources and opportunities are also being developed.

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.

Equality & Diversity e-learning is added to all new starter profiles, with a target date of 90 days to complete. Further learning around more detailed protected characteristics is also available. The proportion of employees who have completed equality training has doubled in the last year from 31% to over 60% with 7699 equality and diversity related courses completed. 2699 staff completed the basic training between October 21 and October 22, along with 23 Councillors and 87% of senior managers.

In 2022 we have introduced a refreshed training programme on inclusion for all staff – this is a combination of the RESPECT programme and Cultural Intelligence programme delivered by Common Purpose. 1187 staff have enrolled on this course.

**Development Opportunities:**

25 places across both Emerging leaders and Senior Leaders programme have been allocated to underrepresented groups across Bradford Council.

The Senior Leaders programme is a talent development programme which commenced in 2022, with places allocated to underrepresented groups across Bradford Council.

There is also an Emerging Leaders talent development programme. This is a 3-month programme which includes 6 online modules and learning groups. Sessions are delivered by Common Purpose and places are allocated to underrepresented groups across Bradford Council.

An Apprenticeship Programme with The University of Birmingham was launched 2/11/2020 for Senior Managers. 30% of those who attended were from a BAME background.

The National Graduate Development Programme commenced September 2020 with three cohorts. Numbers of BAME participants has risen with both graduates starting in October 2021 being from a BAME background.

Minimum number of 5 learning and development days per year per employee is a key part of the Workforce Development Strategy. The new WFD team are benchmarking this to assess the success and current engagement rates.

A Continuous Professional Development 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 the Continuous Professional Development programme.

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 extensively designed to deliver better data insight and intelligence of employee experience so that evidence based actions can be progressed.

## **The RESPECT Campaign and Allyship Programme**

The RESPECT campaign launched this year is the overarching campaign that addresses and supports all Council 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 Team, Human Resources and Communications colleagues.

The launch of the RESPECT SharePoint site for information, resources and communication on equalities took place in Inclusion Week 2021 and has been updated during Inclusion Week 2022.

The Allyship programme has been launched. It 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 the Race Equality Network.

Bradford Council have undergone the roll out of the RESPECT campaign e-learning, with 670 people having completed this training. The Allyship programme has also provided training with 220 people attending Misogyny training; 98 attending disability awareness; 112 attending mental health awareness a session on hybrid identities currently enrolling.

There has been a roll out of the Allyship programme with 427 staff signed up as Allies.

RESPECT Allyship training is in development for Elected Members following the successful feedback from staff training.

## **Grievances**

A review of grievances is underway which is showing that these are reducing alongside a reduction in processing times. Bradford Council's Human Resources Advisory Service continues to proactively advise and guide managers and investigating officers on the efficient management of all grievance processes. Human Resources 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.

All grievances are now monitored by HR. Currently, 75% of grievances are closed within 140 days. The average has decreased from 136 days in Q4 to 89 days in Q1. 41% of all grievances were resolved informally. There has been increased support and coaching to managers conducting processes. Increased mediation and investigators have also been provided.

Since quarter four of 2021/22, there has been a significant decrease in the number of grievance cases being raised by employees within the Council. A total of 11 grievance cases were opened within quarter two of 2022/23.

## **Recruitment, retention and selection**

Currently, more than 20 percent 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, a further 3 in 2022, and a new Strategic Lead for Systems Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. The overall proportion of senior managers from BME backgrounds has increased over the last 12 months.

Human Resources continue to work towards streamlining and refining our current recruitment and selection processes.

In the spirit of fair and transparent recruitment, all recruitment panels are now more diverse and representative. Human Resources have provided staff teams with guidance and support in being able to achieve this. All panels are required to have a BAME member of staff on them.

The use of partner and stakeholder panels in recruitment are also found to be helpful in the recruitment particularly of more senior roles.

Current recruitment and 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 Human Resources systems and access to a full suite of management information.

## 2.7 Communities

**We will encourage all service areas to better understand our communities. We 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.**

**We will ensure through our social value statement in our Procurement Strategy that more resources are retained in the district to support and invest in our people and our voluntary and community sector**

### **Black Lives Matter:**

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.

Council 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.

Further to the recommendations of the Statues and Monuments review, a district wide strategic reference group has been established to deliver the recommendations of the review and have input to the development of initiatives and projects such as the commemorative piece for the Commonwealth soldiers who fought for the Allies in WW1 and WW2.



**Events and opportunities:**

The Council profiled how to better understand working with diverse groups and sharing of the experiences of staff, service users and projects during National Inclusion Week 2022. The week of activities provided many learning opportunities for staff in different ways, and promoted inclusive working to address inequalities. The programme included events from both our internal teams and external partners.

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

Bradford Literature Festival returned in June 2022 with a wider ranging and more diverse programme of learning events that took place across the District.

A number of events have taken place to raise awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion. These have included: Race Equality Week, Remembering Srebrenica, LGBTQ+ Pride events, Holocaust Memorial, Open Iftar, the Queen's Jubilee and a number of other well attended and positive community events,

Programmes of celebrations of diversity have involved departments within the Council working together, and with external partners, to promote and support events which have included: Root Out Racism, Pride, South Asian History Month, Windrush Memorial, Black History Month, and Disability History Month.

**Addressing Disproportionality:**

The Council have published an Economic Recovery Plan that prioritises those most affected by the pandemic. This is included as a background document. There is significant evidence that the COVID pandemic has had a greater economic impact on those with particular protected characteristics, who are more likely to work in the sectors most affected. This includes Black and Minority Ethnic communities, women, younger adults and people on low incomes, who are often in more insecure work.

In line with the District Economic Strategy, the Economic Recovery Plan aims to drive actions that specifically target under-represented groups and specific areas of deprivation. It also aims to address underlying historical labour market disparities and improve workforce diversity, ensuring greater economic participation and opportunity.

The African Study for Change course, from Bradford for Everyone, worked with partners to run African history education classes in the Council and for wider employers in the district. The classes were aimed at helping to promote outcomes to make Bradford District a place where everyone feels safe through increasing understanding and reducing 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 United Kingdom only perspective. The aims were to learn about events and characters not traditionally learnt about in schools and education in the United Kingdom. The result was outstanding, with 87 percent of participants stating they felt they were

less prejudiced toward black people and people of African heritage.

In December 2021 the Council worked with partners from the public and voluntary sectors, using an asset based approach, to produce a European Roma Strategy. With a focus on equality, the strategy aims to support Roma people to be involved and included across Bradford District. The strategy provided a more joined-up approach to Roma integration across sectors, statutory organisations, the voluntary sector, Roma groups and individuals through the development of a joint delivery plan. The objectives of the strategy are to have increased knowledge and learning of: existing gaps, challenges and successes in provision for Roma communities, as well as a better understanding of local issues, and residents' capacity for change. The strategy aims for increased engagement of Roma communities in the District, to be evidenced by an increase in the number of Roma people who feel empowered and involved, and also through increased Roma participation in services.

The Council have completed a Gypsy and Traveller Strategy to support the inclusion of people from the Gypsy and Traveller communities.

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

### **Supporting new and emerging communities:**

Over the last year the Council have worked with partners to develop the Welcome to Bradford website. This project provided information about local services for anyone new to the district and supported the settlement of new arrivals, including Ukrainian families who have relocated to Bradford district,. Information on the site is translated into all the main languages spoken in the district by people who use English as a second language.

Skills House has further developed the English Languages Service 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 service to improve both English language levels and, through working with public health, health and wellbeing outcomes.

Resettlement of Ukrainian people has taken place during the past year and work has been supported in partnership through Access to Housing and working with Stronger Communities.

The European Union Settlement Scheme was completed during the last year. We worked with local communities and partners to ensure people from the European Union completed their Settled Status to regulate their immigration status.

Through the Linking Network, Bradford Council and partners have worked with local schools across Bradford, to link schools and promote social mixing.

Bradford Council have worked with West Yorkshire Police's local area teams to engage people from protected characteristics, including women, young people, migrants and people from faith communities.

Stronger Communities published the findings from their Bradford for Everyone programme in May 2022, which highlights learning to improve cohesion outcomes including a focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the areas of employment, education, social mixing and feeling safe in Bradford District.

**Resourcing:**

The Council approved a £50k investment to support Financial Inclusion, and an additional £600k investment for Assistant Ward Officer recruitment to support and engage with communities across the District. This recruitment has been carried out and work is ongoing.

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.

**Hate crime:**

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

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. This was supported by the University of Bradford's research on hate crime reporting; which was commissioned by the Stronger Communities' programme Bradford For Everyone.

Safer and Stronger Communities worked with Bradford Hate Crime Alliance and West Yorkshire 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. This was in contrast to neighbouring Leeds and Wakefield who recorded declines. The Hate Crime Alliance supported over 2,000 victims and families of hate crime reports, including training, raising awareness and providing emotional support in partnership with West Yorkshire Police and other partners.

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

**Strengthening Communities through Involvement:**

Involving communities in decision making is taking place through the Stronger Communities Ambassadors Programme; the programme includes people from diverse backgrounds across all local areas of Bradford District. The Ambassadors Programme also has a representative at the Stronger Communities Partnership Board.

Stronger Communities is working with partners and communities across all localities in the district on a programme of training to develop understanding and responses to community tension. This includes: resource and partnership with Community Action Bradford and District to support a community voice programme as part of wider infrastructure support for the Voluntary and Community Sector, and also working with the Race Equality Network and with Cnet.

Stronger Communities worked with Bradford Hate Crime Alliance and partners to run a 'Let's Talk About It' course that focused on tackling racism 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, delivered by Bradford Council and partners, focused on reducing rumours and prejudice. The strategy supports people from across the District to practice and promote critical thinking when receiving and sharing uncertain information. The critical thinking campaign area of the strategy 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. The learning project area of the strategy worked 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 and District, to run training courses in a range of settings involving 600 people across the District. Nearly 90 percent of those who took 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.

The Council launched the innovative Citizen Coin app through the Bradford For Everyone programme. The app enables people to earn virtual coins for undertaking social value activities, such as volunteering. People can use their earned coins at an increasing number of local retailers and businesses in the District to receive discounts against goods and services. The app technology records all volunteering activities, helping those who need it to build their Curriculum Vitae and support people to gain paid employment and get into better jobs. As of July 2022, the scheme had approximately 1540 active app users with 7, 678 coins in circulation across the district.

Bradford District Shared Values were launched in 2021. The values are: Respect, Share, Care, Protect. This was the result of a people-led consultation 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 that having a set of shared values that belong to all, will connect us more, help us grow, and create the future we want to experience.

Bradford's People Library has been created as a collection of 'human books' that highlight 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 in Bradford, or those newly arrived. People participated in creating the library from all parts of Bradford District.

The work led by the Holiday Activity and Food programme has been supporting children and families in the most disadvantaged communities across Bradford District in terms of low income. Working with 106 providers, 14,000 children attended the holiday clubs in parks across the district for 42 days over the summer period in 2022.

## 2.8 Service Design

**We will design, commission and deliver services that are accessible, inclusive and responsive to the needs of people and communities. We will 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.**

**We will aim to contract and commission locally wherever possible so that we can support our local economy. This will help us 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 version of the plan to ensure everyone can access the Equality Objectives and Equality Plan 2021-25.

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

The Council has also adopted the accessible information standard. Work is underway to implement this throughout the organisation.

In order to collect data that will enable measuring and effective evidence building, a task and finish group developed a minimum data set requirement for Council services. The aim was to enable to provide services with a better understanding of their user profile and any gaps. The data requirement roll out will ensure that consistent data is collected across the Council, and b commissioned services.

The Council, with its partners in the Voluntary and Community Sector, is committed to improving the way it works to serve the communities of Bradford District. New co-production standards and governance have now been produced 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 co-produced piece of work in Adult Services, working with disabled people and their advocates, is being piloted.

An Equality Impact Assessment training programme has been developed with an Equality Impact Assessment process review underway through the Equality Team. The training has been delivered in four sessions, with a further four sessions planned up to December 2022.

The Equality and Policy teams supported departments and services to undertake their equality impact assessments against the 2021-2022 Council budget proposals. The support was provided to ensure that due consideration for all protected characteristics and low income groups was given, and mitigating action identified to alleviate any disproportionate impacts resulting from the budget proposals.

### **3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

Since publication of the Equality Objectives and Equality Plan 2021-25, the Council has undergone a Peer Review by the Local Government Association, a review by in relation to its work with people from the LGBTQ community, and received wider feedback from the Disability Staff Network through their action plan. These reviews and this feedback, along with further consultation, have informed a refresh of the plan. It is presented to this committee for comment and feedback in a separate report and, following any amendments, will be presented to Council Executive for approval.

Following the Local Government Association peer review recommendations being presented to the Council in early 2022, we have consulted with Council staff and partners to gather feedback to include in the recommended refresh of the Equalities Objectives and Equality Plan. This process has resulted in aligning our equality objectives with the objectives in our Council Plan, and in developing outcomes and measures to increase equality, diversity and inclusion across the Council. Relevant content in the previous plan, under our leadership, workforce, service delivery and communities' objectives, has also been incorporated into the refreshed plan.

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 Departmental Equality Champions, and sessions have been held throughout the district with Voluntary and Community Sector partners.

The redrafted plan has been fed back to those involved in the refresh process. A final draft has also been discussed with Elected Members and unions. It is presented to this committee for comment and feedback in a separate report and, following any amendments, will be presented to Council Executive for approval.

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 in relation to the Local Government Association's Peer Review recommendations and other consultation and feedback, currently include:**

- LGA recommendation three to ‘refresh the current Equality Objectives and Equality Plan’ and on the basis of the feedback received from the recent related consultation and engagement activities which took place in May and June 2022, the objectives have now been refreshed to include and reflect those views.
- LGA recommendation one, to ‘develop a more balanced narrative around equality’, the refreshed plan has been created to further recognise all protected characteristics and in particular the work needed around disability and LGBTQ+ inclusion.
- LGA recommendation one, during our refresh and in relation to a balanced report, the refreshed plan has taken account of and considered documents like the Council Plan, Bradford District Shared Values, the Disability Action Plan and feedback from Stonewall.
- LGA recommendation four, ‘to publish an Equality Objectives and Action Plan that directly links to those in the Corporate Plan’, the equality objectives have remained broadly the same as before, with the addition of ‘Inclusive economy’, which responds to feedback from the peer review in aligning with key documents such as the Council Plan. Each measure in the refreshed plan (now called the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan), has been linked to the measures and objectives in the Council Plan.
- LGA recommendation four, although leadership is no longer a separate objective, its cross cutting outcomes have been aligned and expanded in the four current objectives and remain a priority with clear targets.
- Completion of work is forthcoming on the measurements of the deliverables which will be an ongoing piece of work linking to delivery plans within all Council departments.

**Peer review outcomes; below is an expansion of our progress in relation to each of the recommendations of the Local Government Association Peer Review:**

**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 legally 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.

- A cross Council approach to equalities has been developed through the RESPECT programme which covers all protected characteristics.
- Seven staff networks have been created
- Training is underway through the Allyship programme, including on intersectionality, such as regarding Black and Minority Ethnic 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 Corporate Management Team agenda every week with each report presented highlighting how the equality objectives are being met and taking account of any Equality Impact Assessments 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.

- There has been a programme of consultation with staff, Staff Networks and wider partners across the District. This has included consultation with members and trades unions
- Following this consultation, the required refreshed Equality Objectives and Equality Plan has been drafted and will be finalised before being presented to Council Executive for approval.

**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 the recommendations from the Local Government Association review.
  - takes into account, and is aligned with the Council Plan, the feedback from the Stonewall review and also the Disability Staff Network action plan
- All services have been asked to put equality objectives into their service planning through departmental commitments.
- All staff at Special A grade and above now have an equality objective.
- Work is ongoing to map each outcome to Service Delivery Plans, Team plans and Personal Development Plans.

**Recommendation 5** - Increase the capacity of the Council to work on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion 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 programme support officer.
- The Council has co-funded a Strategic Equality, Diversity and Inclusion lead for the Wellbeing Board.

**Recommendation 6** - All people managers are 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.

- The annual Council Workforce Profile for 2022 is currently being produced and is due to be published by 31 December 2022. Although previous versions of this report did not include information on the proportion of the workforce who identify as being from the LGBTQ+ communities, this will be added to the information that is already collected and reported on for the other protected characteristics, 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 additional financial issues arising from this report that require further approval.

#### **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 purposes.

#### **6. LEGAL APPRAISAL**

The Equality Act 2010 requires all local authorities, to have equality objectives which are monitored and refreshed every four years. The general equality duty under Section 149 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.

The Council has a responsibility to publish information to demonstrate its compliance with the duty imposed by S149 of the Equality Act 2010, and to publish equality objectives and gender pay gap information relating to its employees under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017. In summary, the Council is required to:

4. Publish gender pay gap information
5. Publish information to demonstrate its compliance with the general equality duty
6. At least once every four years, prepare and publish one or more equality objectives that it believes it needs to achieve to further any of the aims of the general equality duty. These objectives are required to be specific and measurable.

## **7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

This report is for updating purposes.

### **7.2 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS**

This report is for updating purposes.

### **7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

This report is for updating purposes.

### **7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT**

This report is for updating purposes on the current plan and it should be noted that equalities is directly linked to ensuring peoples' Human Rights.

### **7.5 TRADE UNION**

This report is for updating purposes.

### **7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS**

This report has implications for each Ward area to put equality at the heart of all work carried out by the Council either directly, through partnership working or through procurement.

### **7.7 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS (for reports to Area Committees only)**

Not applicable.

## **7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

This report is on equalities for all departments which should be actioned when working with all children and young people.

## **7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT**

This report is for updating purposes.

## **8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS**

None.

## **9. OPTIONS**

To accept this update report on the progress made against the Council's equality duty and work.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

To accept this update report on the progress made against the Council's equality duty and work.

## **11. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1: Updated Equalities Action Plan October 2022

## **12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Equality Objectives and Equality Plan 2021-25.  
Economic recovery plan  
Procurement Strategy 2021-25  
LGA: Bradford Equality Peer Challenge report