

Report of the Chief Executive

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ANNUAL REPORT 2018/191. Purpose of report

To provide members with an annual review of activity and outcomes in respect of the Council's equality and diversity work.

2. Background

The Council's Equality and Diversity Policy provides the framework for the Council's approach to the wide-ranging equality and diversity agenda. While incorporating the Council's legal responsibilities as a public body within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, it also outlines the Council's aims and aspirations for achieving cohesive and inclusive communities and ensuring equal access to services. The Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2018/9 is provided at appendix 1 to this report.

Under the Equality Act, public bodies are required to publish equality objectives that will help them further the aims of the general duty. Equality objectives must be specific and measurable and are intended to help focus attention on the priority equality issues within an organisation and help deliver improvements in policy making, service delivery and employment.

Appendix 2 of the report sets out the Council's Equality objectives for 2019/21 and there follows an action plan for 2019-21 based on these objectives.

Appendix 3 sets out progress against objectives set in the plan for 18/19.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to NOTE the report including information contained in appendix 1; the progress in implementing the action plan for 2018/19 set out in appendix 3 and RESOLVE that the proposed Equalities Objectives and action plan for 2019-21 contained in appendices 2 and 4 be approved.

Background papers

Nil

APPENDIX 1

EQUALITIES ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

This report highlights the work undertaken and the progress and achievements made by the Council and its partners in the area of equality and diversity during 2018/19.

1. POLICY CONTEXT

In Broxtowe we want a society in which everyone can contribute to and benefit from our shared ambitions and priorities. This aim is summed up in our policy statement:

‘Broxtowe Borough Council is committed to promoting equal opportunities, valuing diversity and tackling social exclusion. The Council will aim to provide opportunities that meet the diverse needs of different people and groups of people by ensuring that services and employment opportunities are accessible to all. Everyone will be treated fairly and with respect. Diverse needs will be understood and valued. The Council will aim to eradicate all forms of discrimination.’

The Council recognises that it has a duty to mainstream equality and diversity in all it does. We also understand that we have a duty to exercise leadership to promote fundamental rights such as equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination and we accept that we are in a unique position as an employer, service provider and community leader to promote equality and prevent discrimination.

2. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY FRAMEWORK

Broxtowe Borough Council has a strong infrastructure to ensure our commitment to equality and diversity is put into practice. Our policy framework outlines the key elements which contribute to the Council’s approach to the equality and diversity agenda.

2.1 The Equality Framework for Local Government

The Council was recognised at the ‘Achieving’ level of the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG). The accreditation acknowledged our strong corporate and organisational commitment to equality and diversity and our collaborative work with partners in tackling discrimination and disadvantage and in improving the quality of life of our residents.

2.2 Equalities Working Group

The Equalities Working Group is chaired by the Chief Executive and is attended by senior managers and front line staff from all of the Council’s departments and key service areas. Meetings of the group are also attended by trade union representatives. The group drives the equality and diversity work across the Council and is responsible for ensuring actions and targets are mainstreamed both corporately and across service areas. During 2018/19 the group has:

- monitored progress against the Council’s published equality objectives.

- Overseen progress against equality impact assessments undertaken during the year.
- Reviewed the take up of interactive training for equality and diversity through the Broxtowe Learning Zone, including training on the Equality Act 2010, visual impairment, autism awareness, deaf awareness, dementia awareness, preventing extremism and learning disability and introducing a new suicide prevention e-learning framework
- Overseen the roll out of mental health first aid training for all Managers
- Given advice and guidance on initiatives on hate crime, refugees, dementia, on the new People strategy, child poverty action plan and learning disabilities journey study.
- Received reports from the Disability Forum
- Discussed national reports and the implications of recommendations such as the LGA research on cohesion and integration in Broxtowe

2.3 Equalities Impact Assessments

An equality impact assessment (EIA) is a way of determining that a policy, function or service is delivered fairly to all sections of the community and that it promotes equality wherever possible. If a negative impact on a particular equality group is identified when undertaking an EIA, steps should be taken immediately to remove it if it cannot be justified.

During the course of 2018/19 the following EIAs were completed:

- Gas and electrical safety policies
- Void management policy
- Policy for customers with additional and support needs
- Allocations policy
- Rent arrears policy
- Leasehold management policy
- Tenancy management policy
- Housing repairs policy
- Discharge of homelessness duty through use of private sector accommodation policy
- Garage management policy
- Right to buy policy
- Contaminated land strategy
- Play strategy:
- Land disposals policy
- Decant Policy
- Alterations and improvements policy
- Pets policy
- Town centre trading policy
- Apprenticeship strategy
- People strategy
- Agency workers policy
- Trade Unions consultation policy
- Equal opportunities policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy

- Flexible retirement policy
- Learning and Development policy
- The budget for 19/20
- Statement of licensing policies
- Gambling Act statement of principles
- Dog control policy
- Safeguarding children policy
- Safeguarding adults policy
- Beeston Town Hall sale
- Guidance for the use of local lettings policy
- Housing recharge (sundry debts) policy
- HR Policies
 - Capability
 - Probation
- Flexible working
- Job sharing
- Leave
- Redeployment

The Council will continue to assess the impact of new policies, functions or services or revisions to them to ensure compliance with its legal obligations and to demonstrate that it has considered the impact of its decisions on people who share a protected characteristic.

The Council monitors information regarding its employees, and its recruitment policies, and the annual workforce profile was produced for 2018/19 which is available on the Council's intranet.

2.4 Training

The training section of the Human Resources division has a comprehensive equality and diversity learning programme which is fully endorsed by the corporate Equalities Working Group. As part of the corporate induction course, all new employees receive a copy of the 'Equality and Diversity at Work' handbook which is designed to reinforce the messages contained within the presentation. During the course of 2018/19, the following numbers of employees completed online learning courses relating to equality issues

Course	Mar 2019	
	Complete	In progress
Equality Act 2010 – live since 2014	496	5
Equality Act 2010 for ICT Services updated August 2018	5	1
Learning Disability Awareness includes dyslexia – live since Oct 2016	28	1

Autism Awareness – live since Oct 2016	53	5
Deaf Awareness – live since Feb 2017	24	2
Dementia Awareness – updated June 2019	48	5
Hate Crime – live since Oct 2017	502	2
Visual Impairment – live since March 2018	22	0
Mental Health Awareness – live since May 2017	34	9

Learning Zone is accessible from a computer, laptop, tablet or smartphone, enabling users to access the site either at work, as part of their agreed learning programme, or in their own time for personal development

A range of other e-learning programmes have been developed and are made available to employees.

Knowledge and awareness of equality and diversity issues has been designed in to the Council's Core Abilities Framework, which is the competency framework against which employees are assessed and against which annual personal development plans are developed.

The Council also undertook a number of face to face training programmes relating to

2.5 Community Engagement

Broxtowe's Communications Strategy provides a framework for consulting with local people and stakeholders in the planning and delivery of services. We have a number of established means of communication including Community Action Teams (CATs), consultation with our tenants and leaseholders through Open Forums, Service Review Groups and Resident Involvement Groups and the Broxtowe Disability Forum.

In addition to these long-established and continuing consultation and engagement mechanisms, the Council undertook a number of additional bespoke consultation and/or engagement exercises during 2018/19 in order to gauge opinion, seek expert advice or to facilitate successful community projects.

Examples of these included consultation involved regarding Local Plan part 2 land allocations; Budget consultation for 2019/20, consultation with tenants in relation to the reshaping of the independent living service, and consultation regarding the future of Beeston Town Hall and Beeston Town centre regeneration.

The Disability Forum considered issues such as:

- The disability confident employer scheme
- Housing engagement strategy

- Housing engagement with tenants with disabilities
- Universal credit
- Learning disabilities learning journey
- Dementia action plan
- Access to Beeston station
- Mental health task and finish group
- Adult care service overview
- Voter ID pilot
- Disabled parking
- Budget consultation 19/20
- Accessibility of polling stations
- Assistance to visually impaired people to vote
- Communications strategy
- Independent living review

2.6 Complaints

Of the 344 stage 1 complaints recorded in 2018/19, 142 were completed with the monitoring data.

Equalities Monitoring of complaints

Of the 344 stage 1 complaints recorded, 142 were completed with the monitoring data.

Gender

Male – 48
 Female – 70
 Not stated - 24

Ethnic Groups

British – 102
 Indian – 3
 Caribbean -1
 African - 1
 Irish/Traveller - 1
 Not stated – 33
 Any other Asian – 1

Age groups

<17 - 1
 18–24 – 14
 25–29 – 12
 30–44 – 24
 45–59 – 31
 60–64 – 8
 65+ – 10
 Not stated – 42

Long term health problem that limits daily activity?

Yes – 28
 No – 70
 Not stated - 44

There does not appear to be a pattern of discrimination relating to people with disabilities or ethnic origin. The number of complaints by females as opposed to males is higher than in previous years, when it has consistently been equally split. This is something that will be continuously monitored.

3. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ACHIEVEMENTS DURING 2018/19

This section of the report is intended to highlight some key achievements and developments in 2018/19 both in meeting the needs of vulnerable people and in responding to the aspirations of our diverse communities. Outcomes are highlighted across our corporate priorities.

3.1 Housing

The Housing Committee completed a review of its Retirement Living service. This resulted in completely re-shaping the independent living service; offering independent living assessments to our tenants and personalised action plans. New job descriptions for officers were devised and new activities officers appointed in order to promote wellbeing, independence and social enjoyment.

Our work on dementia progressed, with plans progressed to develop another two new dementia friendly bungalows in Beeston.

Adaptations to properties for people with disabilities were made in accordance with the policy. Expenditure of £841,565 was incurred in 2018/19.

A new Tenancy agreement was approved . There is an “easy read” version of this (as a result of a “learning journey” for people with learning disabilities as far as the housing service is concerned)

A new structure was approved for housing with the rents team moving in to the housing department and additional officers whose role it is to focus on tenancy sustainment and financial inclusion. This is particularly useful for tenants with additional support needs

A Universal credit steering group continued to operate which includes the CAB, the housing section, Housing benefits section and DWP. This is ensuring that there is good planning to support people as Universal credit is introduced.

3.2 Business Growth

Under this priority the Council seeks to encourage business growth, the regeneration of town centres and in particular the implementation of Beeston town centre phase 2.

By the end of March 2018 Broxtowe had provided a total of 15 work experience placements to students, young job seekers and the long-term unemployed. 10 apprenticeship positions were in place at Broxtowe. A new apprenticeship strategy was produced during the year. The Council made special efforts to offer work experience placement.

Included within the Eastwood Action plan (another area of higher unemployment, lower educational attainment, higher poverty and poorer health outcomes), were initiatives which related to the running of a Job club in Eastwood, partnership with the CAB relating to additional debt advice in Eastwood; information events aimed families in partnership with the childrens' centre; substance misuse initiatives aimed at Young people in Eastwood in partnership with Change Grow Live and Eastwood young people's centre; smoking cessation activity and work to set up an Eastwood mental health hub in partnership with the CAB and MIND.

3.3 The Environment

The Council is committed to protecting the environment and enhancing it for future generations and seeks to achieve this aim through innovative approaches to waste management and recycling, energy reduction, and the management and enhancement of our parks and open spaces. It is standard procedure in relation to all capital projects to enhance parks and open spaces to pay attention to the needs of disabled children and accessibility for disabled people to our parks and open spaces.

We recognise that the environment belongs to everyone and we endeavour to work with our community to achieve our objectives. Tree and shrub planting schemes take place with the engagement of local residents and community groups, particularly children and young people.

Our waste and recycling service provides an assisted collections service for domestic refuse. Disabled people, the elderly and the infirm, who may experience difficulty in placing their refuse bins at their property boundary ready for collection, receive a service which enables the bin to be pulled out for them. The service can also be offered on a temporary basis to people recovering from illness or injury or following surgery and which restricts their ability to place their bins at the appropriate collection point. In addition there are several of our housing complexes where all bins are pulled out without having to go through the application process.

An area of Chilwell cemetery has been allocated for Muslim burials and is now available.

3.4 Health

L Leisure, the Council's leisure company, continued to provide opportunities to participate in activities regardless of age, gender, ethnic origin or physical ability. These included free swimming sessions for children during the school summer holidays, and targeted activities such as walking football sessions to encourage less active people to take physical exercise.

The Health partnership task group continues to deliver a programme of activities to address health inequalities in Broxtowe. This has included delivery of actions to encourage breastfeeding; reduce drug and alcohol misuse, reduce obesity and improve mental wellbeing.

The Council has developed and delivered a dementia action plan and a child poverty action plan. A multi-agency stakeholder group is meeting to help map services for people diagnosed with dementia in order to help these people link up with support services. This work has led to the potential creation of a new resource centre for people with dementia in Broxtowe and the Borough's vision for people in our area to live well with dementia was instrumental in influencing a private company to successfully seek planning permission to create a "dementia village" in our area.

Through the Health task group a learning disabilities network was set up which is helping people with learning disabilities to access services. This work is progressing to a deeper level in the Housing section.

Throughout the year, we worked with partners to deliver and support a number of successful community and multi-cultural events across the borough, including the Hemlock Happening and Christmas Lights switch on events.

Free swimming in the school holidays and Free play days run by liberty Leisure in Eastwood Kimberley, Stapleford and Beeston in July and August continue to enable youngsters from low income families to benefit from activity during the school holidays.

During the year, the Broxtowe Community Celebration Group worked to celebrate the diversity of our local community and to build positive partnerships between different faith and cultural groups. Unfortunately this group will cease to exist at the end of 2019, so if events previously organised by the group are to continue, fresh leadership. Councillors' views are sought on how this might best be achieved.

Holocaust Memorial day was solemnly remembered on 28 January 2018. Between 50-60 people attended including a Polish lady whose Grandfather had died in one of the death camps. She explained that the event is a helpful and important part of her calendar every year. The event's theme was "torn from home" and the focus was on the idea that Broxtowe was a home for those who had been displaced due to war or natural disasters. Speakers included Miso, a 7-year-old former Syrian refugee who has made Broxtowe her home.

The 14th annual Community Celebration event was held in July 2018 at its usual venue, Round Hill School, Beeston, where hundreds of people enjoyed food, music and performances which were representative of faiths and cultures from around the world. A post event evaluation was held and those surveyed overwhelmingly agreed that the event was successful in bringing people from different backgrounds together.

A Black History event took place in November 2018 at Alderman White school. Groups of 12 to 13 year olds heard personal stories of from our Caribbean Elders of their journey from the Caribbean and how life has changed drastically for them. Pupils also enjoyed Carib bean fruit tasters. The Elders re-launched their "Walk down Memory Lane" book which tells the story of the Windrush generation.

The calendar year concluded on 1 December 2018 with the cross-cultural 'Season of Lights' celebration .490 visitors attended, when there was an afternoon of culture music dance arts crafts and food. Festivals marked included Milan, Advent, Diwali, Hanukkah and those from Chinese and Russian cultures

Borough Councillors participated in the "Visit your Mosque" day in 2018 at Beeston Muslim centre.

3.5 Community Safety

Crime disproportionately affects more deprived wards in Broxtowe. The Police and Crime Commissioner funded work which provided additional measures to tackle crime in Eastwood South during 2018/19.

The local community came together in January 2019 to mark the 19th annual Holocaust Memorial Day, which the Council is proud to have marked for a number of years. Those attending the ceremony at the Walled Garden at Bramcote Hills Park included civic dignitaries, members, officers, and community leaders, members of the public and young people from across the Borough.

The Refugee Steering group met regularly to oversee arrangements to support the welfare of those settling in our area under the Vulnerable People's resettlement programme.

APPENDIX 2

BROXTOWE'S EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

Through these five broad headings and the targeted work identified under each one we propose to address our main priorities for improving our understanding of the inequalities in the borough, addressing identified needs and fostering good relations between our diverse communities.

Develop our knowledge and understanding of the communities we serve

- Keep borough profile data up to date and undertake an annual review of the statistical profile of Broxtowe and the disaggregated ward and community profiles to spot changes which might need changes to patterns of service delivery.
- Improve the quality of data about the issues affecting disadvantaged and minority groups including those protected under the Equality Act.

Identify and deliver actions which aim to narrow the gap in outcomes between disadvantaged groups and the wider community

- Work with partner agencies to identify health inequalities within disadvantaged groups and sections of the community and deliver targeted work through the Leisure and Health Committee and the Health and Older People's Task Group of the Broxtowe Partnership.
- Work with partners on the South Nottinghamshire Community Safety Partnership to deliver targeted work to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and improve outcomes for vulnerable people.
- Deliver the pledges we have undertaken to tackle and alleviate child poverty in Broxtowe as part of our Child Poverty Strategy.
- Continue to deliver actions to address the needs of minority and vulnerable groups including work on supporting people to live well with dementia, work to tackle loneliness and to support those with mental health problems and learning disabilities.

Improve service design and delivery through improved communication and engagement with our communities

- promote the use of customer engagement and feedback to inform the way services are designed and delivered.
- improve and strengthen existing community engagement mechanisms through Community Action Teams, service review groups, the disability forum and local community groups and ensure consultation and engagement outcomes are fed back into the policy making arena.

Embed equalities throughout the Council

- Develop our workforce planning and profile data to improve the quality of protected characteristic information.
- Undertake a self-assessment against the criteria of the 'Excellent' accreditation of the Equality Framework for Local Government.
- Continue to deliver equality awareness training as part of the corporate induction process for employees and members.
- Continue to provide equality and diversity training to all employees and members.
- Improve the quality and quantity of information on the Council's website and improved monitoring of targeted outcomes.
- Learn from case study "customer journey" studies in order to progress understanding of the experience of customers with protected characteristics of the council's services.

Foster good relations between our communities

- Continue to support and promote events and activities that bring people together, celebrating the diversity of the borough and contributing to community cohesion.
- Improve the way in which refugees and asylum seekers are supported within the community with the assistance of voluntary effort within the community.