

Birmingham City Council

Report to Cabinet

10th November 2020



Subject: Workforce Race Equity Review 2019-2020

Report of: Dawn Hewins, Human Resources Director

Relevant Cabinet Member: Councillor John Cotton, Social Inclusion, Community Safety & Equalities

Relevant O &S Chair(s): Councillor Carl Rice, Co-ordinating O&S Committee

Report author: Craig Scriven, Assistant Director Organisational Development

Are specific wards affected? ☐ Yes ☒ No – All wards affected

If yes, name(s) of ward(s):

Is this a key decision? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If relevant, add Forward Plan Reference:

Is the decision eligible for call-in? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If relevant, provide exempt information paragraph number or reason if confidential:

1 Executive Summary

As articulated in the Cabinet Report “Everyone’s Battle, Everyone’s Business – tackling inequality in Birmingham” of the 8th September 2020, we believe that Birmingham City Council should take a lead as an employer and our goal is to ensure that our workforce properly reflects the communities we serve.

Many of the leadership bodies within the city, including the Council, have rightly been criticised for failing to properly reflect the diversity of our city with regard to race and gender. This has to change. We must act now, by actively developing a cohort of our future leaders who ‘look like Birmingham’, alongside our work to remove structural barriers that create inequities.

As a result, we have jointly created our first Workforce Race Equity Review (2019-2020). This review sets out the challenges that Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic colleagues face within the workforce.

In October 2019 following a request from Cabinet Members, the Organisational Development team commenced a review of any data relating to Race Pay Gap reporting. This quickly developed into a wider holistic review of racial equity.

The data has been reviewed and it has been identified that as an organisation we don't reflect the demographics of our City with 67% of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff being in operational or front-facing services, and we don't recruit sufficient Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff at supervisory and management levels. There is also a need to review roles where promotion, recruitment and career pathways are concerned

Our Workforce Race Equity Review sets an ambitious aim to have a fully representative workforce and to eliminate any race pay gap by September 2025. In order to achieve this aim we have identified a range of actions which are contained within the main body of the Workforce Race Equity Review at Appendix 1 and the Action & Implementation Plan at Appendix 2.

2 Recommendations

2.1 That Cabinet:

2.2 Notes the progress to date, the Council's organisational commitment to advancing equalities, and in this context, to specifically eradicating any race pay gap by 2025 and ensuring that our workforce is fully representative of the City as a whole.

2.3 Approves the continued work in the implementation plan and to approve the request for permanent resources to be allocated to the delivery of the action plan.

3 Progress made to date

Alongside the work to develop the Workforce Race Equity Review, several key activities are also underway. We have:

- Commenced a review our recruitment and selection policies to ensure that they meet our objectives.
- Commenced the work to ensure that inclusive language is used at all stages of the employee journey.
- Implemented recruitment and selection and unconscious bias training, which will be mandated for all recruiting managers.
- Investigated the benefits of Artificial Intelligence in our recruitment marketing to ensure that our opportunities reach all areas of our community.
- Drafted a partnership agreement with Birmingham City University to implement work placements and opportunities for their students.
- Commenced work on the BRUM pioneer programme aimed at improving the leadership behaviours, with a specific focus on improving inclusivity across our Senior Leadership Community.

- Removed institutional barriers to progression and developing career pathways, specifically we have amended our Secondment Policy to encourage movement.
- Implemented our first Culture Change Framework incorporating behavioural indicators.
- Drafted our first EDI Strategy and Implementation plan.
- Commenced work to renew our corporate relationship with Staff Equality Networks which will include regular check and challenge meetings.
- Implemented annual mandatory equalities training for all staff, this will be further rolled out to every elected Councillor.
- Commenced work on a "Rebuilding Trust" programme which will be delivered across the organisation at all levels. This will be co-designed with Trade Unions and our Staff Networks.
- Increased quality interactions with Trade Unions to rebuild the spirit of collaboration around all workforce issues.
- Hosted numerous forums to ask the difficult questions and listen to the lived experience of our colleagues.
- Identified the gaps in our data which make it challenging to clearly articulate the issues.
- Commenced discussions with trade unions and the Diversity Alliance Network to improve messaging around the reasons for data collection with our colleagues.
- Implemented mandatory data submission from managers at all stages of the recruitment cycle.
- Commenced data cleansing to support the implementation of the Oracle Enterprise Resource Planning (1B) system, our new Finance, Procurement and HR system.
- Contacted each member of the Extended Leadership Team to encourage them to complete their data. We need our leaders to model the behaviours for our colleagues.

4 Next steps

The actions attached in Appendices 1 and 2 will be put in to place and reviewed regularly to ensure that they are achieving our objectives. These are designed to address issues in the themes of recruitment and selection, career development, culture change, rebuilding trust and improving data.

5 Our Statutory Duty

The Council's approach to equality in the workplace and service delivery is shaped by the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which requires public bodies, in carrying out their services and functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those that do not.

In October 2019, the Council completed a council-wide review of equality, diversity and inclusion to ensure we were meeting our legal obligations, and also to identify gaps to deliver improvements in policymaking, service delivery, and employment, including resource allocation. The review was based on self-assessment against the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG), analysis of the workforce equality data and the gender pay gap report. The framework enables understanding across five key performance areas:

- Knowing our Communities - analysing and using information.
- Effective leadership, partnership and organisational commitment.
- Involving our communities.
- Responsive services and customer care.
- Skilled and committed workforce.

The findings of the review identified policy areas where we needed to do more to advance equality and provided a strong evidence base to develop the council's equality objectives for 2019 – 2023.

6 Consultation

Cabinet Members have been consulted and involved in shaping the Workforce Race Equity Review 2019 - 2020.

The Council's Executive Management Team has been consulted on and involved in shaping the Workforce Race Equity Review 2019-2020.

The Council's Corporate Leadership Team has been consulted on the Workforce Race Equity Review 2019-2020 and involved in the preparation of the review.

Councillor John Cotton, Portfolio Holder Social Inclusion, Community Safety & Equalities and Councillor Tristan Chatfield, Portfolio Holder Finance & Resources are sponsors of the Workforce Race Equity Review.

Trade Union colleagues have provided their views and feedback, which have been considered in creating the Workforce Race Equity Review.

7 Risk Management

The Council has established an Equality and Cohesion Star Chamber, chaired by the Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, Community Safety and Equalities to oversee the delivery of its Equality Objectives 2019 - 2023 and support compliance with the Public Sector Duty. In addition, a corporate Equality and Cohesion officer working group, chaired by the Assistant Chief Executive, supports the work programme of the Equality and Cohesion Star Chamber.

8 Compliance Issues

The renewed approach to addressing inequalities will be at the core of the Council's Delivery Plan for the next two years. It will ensure our ongoing commitment to reducing inequalities underpins everything we do and is embedded in our plans and strategies.

9 Legal Implications

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 enacts a single general public sector equality duty (PSED) which applies to public authorities exercising public functions. The duty on public authorities to have "due regard" to the PSED in *section 149(1)* of the Equality Act 2010 is more than simply a requirement to have general regard. Real thought must be given to the PSED and its requirements.

Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 state that the Council must prepare and publish at least one equality objective once every four years.

Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 impose a duty on specified public authorities with at least 250 employees to publish gender pay gap information relating to employees, in order to demonstrate compliance with the public sector equality duty.

The actions in this report and adoption of the proposed objectives will ensure the above legal requirements are met.

10 Financial Implications

In order to deliver the recommendations, we need to allocate resources to ensure that we make the progress urgently required. At present, members of the Organisational Development team have been supporting the review and some of the actions, this work has been prioritised meaning that other urgent work has been postponed.

The requirements are detailed below but the potential costs of the team are in the region of £0.205m per annum.

11 Human Resources Implications (if required)

As outlined above there is a proposed creation of dedicated resource and staff capacity to deliver the Council's Workforce Race Equity review recommendations. The expectation is that the team will be made up from 1 GR5 and 3 GR4 officers. The team will be recruited in November and December 2020 to provide an engine room in driving the Council's workforce equity ambitions.

12 Public Sector Equality Duty

The Council has statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010, collectively referred to as the general duty to promote equality. The Council also has a specific duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people.

Decision-makers are required under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 to promote equality for persons with the following protected characteristics: age, disability gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Decisions need to show due regard to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those that do not.

The proposed actions in this report will ensure the Public Sector Equality Duty is met.

13 Appendices

13.1 Appendix 1 – BCC Workforce Race Equity Review 2019-2020

13.2 Appendix 2 – BCC Workforce Race Equity Action & Implementation Plan 2020-2021