

Appendix 3

Birmingham City Council - Equality Objectives 2019-2023 Equality Impact Assessment

Title of proposed EIA

Birmingham City Council Equality Objectives 2019 to 2023

EIA is in support of

Revised Policy

Directorate

Performance, Insights and Partnerships

Service Area

Across all Service areas

Responsible Officer

Suwinder Bains, Equalities and Cohesion Manager

Purpose of proposal

The Council has a legal duty to publish at least one equality objective every four years. Five equality objectives have been developed to focus attention on the priority equality issues within the council. These objectives will deliver improvements in policy making, service delivery and employment. The objectives were produced using evidence from an corporate equality self-assessment, local demographic sources, consultations and deprivation data.

The council is committed to advancing equality where everyone is able to achieve their aspirations, regardless of where they live or grow up. Everyone should have the same chance to succeed and flourish in life, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, faith, disability, or class.

What sources of information/data have been used to produce the screening of this policy/proposal?

The sources of information used to produce the screening were: Census 2011, Community Cohesion Strategy for Birmingham, The Council's self-assessment Equality Framework for Local Government analysis, Gender Pay Gap report 2018, workforce profile data and monitoring report 2018, Council Plan 2022.

PLEASE ASSESS THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF YOUR PROPOSAL ON THE FOLLOWING PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

Age

Our approach to progressing equality and inclusion is one which includes everyone, regardless of background or characteristics. Therefore, achieving our objectives will bring positive benefits to all individuals, communities and staff.

However, we know that older vulnerable people are more likely to access and rely on council services. Despite being a young city, we are expected to see a larger growth of older adults age 65+ (6%) and 90+ (10.3%) by 2023. (*source: ONS Mid-2016 Projections*)

The older adult population has and will continue to rise in Birmingham, with increases of 24% for those aged 85+ years expected in the next 10 years. Nearly a fifth of households being older people are living alone with health problems and/or disability. Therefore, it's important that we understand the needs of our diverse older population as part of on an going learning process. Equally, we must shape and deliver our services in response to these changing needs.

Our equality objectives will be embedded across our service plans, policies and strategies to ensure that our decisions do not have any adverse impact on older people.

Based on 2016 ONS projections, in Birmingham between 2018 and 2022 children under 15 are due to increase by 3%. Of these, children aged 0 to 4 are due to grow by 1.5% to 86,000 children, but the latest growth rate in Birmingham children will be the 10 to 14 age group – increasing by 6.0% to 84,900. More than 40% of Birmingham's school children have a first language that is known or believed to be other than English (42%).

Nearly 1 in 4 children in Birmingham are living in poverty. Despite the overall improvement in GSCE levels there are still significant differences in educational attainment between certain social groups in the city. These are just some of the key challenges which disproportionately impact young people from lower income backgrounds. Our objectives will aim to bring positive impacts by working with our communities, young people, voluntary sector agencies and public sector agencies, to find the best solutions to improve the life chances of all young people.

The Equality Objectives ensure that we understand the needs of our communities, including older and young people. These objectives will drive positive impacts on a range of age groups.

Disability

In the 2011 Census 98,181 citizens reported a disability or long-term health problem that limited their day-to-day activities a lot, and a further 99,720 reported a similar condition that limited these activities a little.

One in four adults in the West Midlands has a mental health issue. Particular groups of people are at greater risk of mental illness, including people from ethnic minority communities, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people. Many people with a physical health condition also have a mental health condition.

In Birmingham, around 1% of supported working age adults with a learning disability are in paid employment compared to the England average of 5.8%, this relates to just 21 in 2,166 people. Residents and staff will have different experiences of disability.

Our equality objectives will aim to ensure that we have a greater understanding of these different experiences and develop services and policies that respond to the different needs.

The Council is currently a Disability Confident Employer and we aim to improve our position to achieve accreditation of 'excellence'. We will aim for greater staff diversity, including disabled people, at all levels of the workforce to ensure representation helps shape inclusive policies and services for disabled people.

The equality objectives will aim to address a broad set of inequalities experienced by disabled people within the communities and workforce. These objectives will drive positive impacts for disabled people.

SEX

Birmingham's population is made up of 50.5% females and 49.5% males.

Gender inequality and gender-based violence can affect both men and women, although in many areas evidence suggests that inequalities disproportionately impact women.

These inequalities are often even greater for individuals with more than one protected characteristic for example women with a long-term illness or disability are more than twice as likely to have experienced domestic abuse in the last year as other women. Women from mixed/multiple ethnic groups were more likely to have experienced domestic abuse in the last year than any other ethnic group.

Many of the issues such as poverty, low pay and skills, mental health and homelessness - continue to disproportionately affect women. Women living in social housing were nearly three times more likely to have experienced domestic abuse in the last year than women who owned their homes.

Female residents in Birmingham earn less than males, with average gross incomes for full time workers having a £5k gender pay gap. Our Equality Objectives will help the council promote greater gender equality for our residents, service users and our employees.

The Council's equality objectives will ensure that no-one is discriminated because of their sex.

Gender Reassignment

Data on gender reassignment figures are not available at city level. However, a study by the Gender Reassignment Education and research study found that there is an estimated number of 300,000 to 500,000 transgender people in the UK.

There are no local estimates of the number of trans people living in Birmingham, however nationally there are estimated to be between 200,000-500,000 trans people in the UK.

Surveys in the UK by Stonewall and other organisations have shown that trans people experience significant discrimination and inequalities, for example one survey 41% of trans men and women reported having experienced hate crime because of their gender identity in the last 12 months (source: Trans people in the UK. Government Equality Office)

Our Equality Objectives will aim to promote equality for all Trans people across our service users, residents and workforce.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

In the 2011 Census there were 163,204 people in the city who were married and 803 who were registered in a civil partnership. Our equality objectives will aim to promote policies and ways of working that advance equality for people who are married or in a civil partnership in the workplace.

Pregnancy and Maternity

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against someone, or treat them unfairly, because of the pregnancy or maternity. Our Equality objectives will protect against any unfavourable treatment because of pregnancy or maternity. Unfavourable treatment means that someone is worse off because of discrimination, such as, not getting a promotion at work. It's also unlawful to treat breastfeeding mothers unfavourably.

Race

Birmingham is a super-diverse city, with over 42% of the population being from an ethnic minority background, reflecting the city's rich and varied cultural heritage. There are people from nearly 200 countries who have made Birmingham their home. The 2011 Census revealed that 42.1% classified themselves within an ethnic group other than white British, compared to 30% in 2001, a rise of 12%. According to the 2011 census over 60% of the under 18 population is now from a non-white British background, compared to around 44% in 2001.

Research suggests that low educational attainment for some black, Asian and ethnic minorities children remains a stubborn statistic across our schools. Increasingly, we find that white boys from poorer economic backgrounds underachieve at school, compared to their peers in other ethnic groups. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children experience some of the worst educational outcomes of all ethnic groups, regardless of gender.

In some areas of the city over 50% of children from black, Asian and ethnic minority backgrounds are in poverty.

Employment and pay gaps are wider for black, Asian and minority people when compared to their white peers.

People from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities continue to face racial bias in parts of the criminal justice system, as identified by the Lammy Review. More specifically, young people from black and black British ethnic groups are more likely to receive a custodial sentence if charged with a crime.

These are just some of the facts and figures that have shaped our equality objectives. Our equality objectives are designed to make a positive impact in promoting greater equality across all our work and within our workforce. We want to ensure that no-one is disadvantaged or discriminated because of their race.

Sexual Orientation

The Government estimates 5-7% of the population of England and Wales is lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB). In 2018, the adult population (aged 18+) in Birmingham was 852,986, so the government's 5-7% estimate would mean an LGB population in the city of between 42,650 and 59,700.

Lesbian, gay and bisexual people experience significant inequalities in health, employment, education and crime and often experience challenges in accessing services because of fear, or experience, of discrimination.

Our equality objectives will aim to protect LGB people from being discriminated against or treated unfairly across all our work.

Religion or Beliefs

Birmingham is a city of many faiths and beliefs. The 2011 Census found that Christianity is the most commonly reported religion in the city (46.07%) followed by Islam (21.85%), Sikhism (3.02%) and Hinduism (2.08%) and Buddhism (0.45%). 19.27% of citizens reported having no religion. The Equality Act 2010 also protects people of no religions.

Our equality objectives are designed to have a positive impact to ensure that our policies and practices do not discriminate on the grounds of religion or belief in all aspects of employment. Our equality objectives will consider the interests and concerns of all religious and non-religious groups.

Please indicate any actions arising from completing this initial screening exercise

The Equality Objectives 2019 -2023 aim to improve the equality and wellbeing of all people, including all with protected characteristics. This assessment did not highlight any negative impact on groups. Instead, the assessment shows a potential for positive impacts of our objectives in promoting equality and fairness across all protected characteristics.

The assessment has shown how the Equality Objectives help address the very real challenges that undermine equality and inclusion. As a council, we must not ignore these challenges but work together across our diverse communities, services users, partners and staff to make sure that everyone can expect to be treated equally and has a fair chance to improve their life chances without discrimination.

There is significant evidence that shows the inequalities of how people from different ethnic backgrounds experience access to education, employment, healthcare and in the criminal justice system. Across a range of measures, we are seeing, ethnic minorities have worse outcomes when compared to White people. However, more recently we are seeing white boys from low income backgrounds performing below average.

The equality objectives will help us build on our limited understanding of the impact of multiple disadvantages. For example, the impact of welfare reforms on disabled lone parent mothers. We recognise that our policy making, and services should address inequality through a lens of 'multiple' disadvantage that most vulnerable often experience.

The Equality objectives will help us to address the stubborn inequalities that persist across all protected characteristics.

We will integrate our objectives across all our service areas, policy making and delivery. Progress will be monitored and overseen at a senior executive level

Is a full impact assessment is recommended?

An ongoing cumulative impact assessment of the equality objectives will be produced from individual service and policy specific equality impact assessments.

What information/data has been collected to facilitate the assessment of this policy/proposal?

The evidence base from desktop literature analysis and the public consultation has helped produce the five equality objectives.

Any consultation analysis

A public and staff consultation was carried out to sought views on the objectives, as well as briefings with trade unions and staff networks. Feedback on the proposed objectives was largely in agreement of the five objectives

Is there any adverse impact/s on any people with protected characteristics?

There are no adverse impacts on people with protected characteristics. The Equality Objectives have been produced to promote greater equality and to make positive impacts.

If yes, please explain your reasons for going ahead with your proposal?

Not applicable.

Could the policy/proposal be modified to reduce or eliminate any adverse impact on any particular protected equality group(s)?

The Objectives have been designed to protect all groups from any adverse effects. As part of the ongoing monitoring of the objectives we will be able to identify any gaps and appropriate take action

How will the effect(s) of this policy/proposal on equality be monitored?

The Equality Objectives will be integrated across council service plans, policies and strategies and progress assessed through individual EIAs. Strategic oversight of the objectives will be monitored by a senior executive team chaired by the Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, Community Safety and Equalities.

Summary and evidence of findings from EIA

The Equality Objectives aim to advance equality and foster good relations across all protected characteristics.

Last updated: January 2020

