

**Sunderland City Council**

**Equality Scheme 2017 – 2021**

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## Foreword

The council recognises and values highly the diversity of people within the city and recognises that both good physical and mental wellbeing are paramount to equality of opportunity. We are clear that everyone should be treated as equals, irrespective of their circumstances or background. We are fully committed to equality for all to ensure we can all be the best we can be. This involves eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity; and fostering good relations between people. We are also committed to ensuring that all of our priorities, policies and practices reflect this.

In 2017 we face our most challenging budget yet, requiring savings of at least £74m by 2019/20. Over the last six years we have seen unprecedented cuts and cost pressures, with £250 million having already been saved. To respond to these cuts and cost pressures we have had to change fundamentally in size and focus. We will continue to work with our partners in health, education, the voluntary sector and private business to help our residents and local economy prosper. A key focus will be in the analysis of information to develop intelligence that will enable us to prioritise and allocate resources even more effectively. Intelligence that helps us to understand and respond to equalities and inequalities in our city is of paramount importance – we need to be confident that we are making informed decisions and doing the right things on behalf of the communities we serve.

Through these tough financial times we will continue to promote equality of opportunity across the city and ensure that wherever possible, potentially vulnerable groups and individuals needs are met. We will also continue to work to foster good relations between different groups and communities in the city. Central to the design of our Equality Scheme is the belief that by addressing inequalities and helping to remove barriers to opportunities, individuals will flourish and be the best they can be, and in turn communities will be stronger, integrated and more resilient.

Cllr Harry Trueman  
Leader of the Council

Irene Lucas CBE  
Chief Executive

## Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction .....	4
2.0 Arrangements for delivering equality .....	5
2.1 People responsible for equality .....	5
2.2 Groups promoting equality .....	5
2.3 Mechanisms promoting equality.....	6
3.0 Equality throughout our work .....	7
3.1 Equality in customer service .....	7
3.2 Equality in strategic planning .....	8
3.3 Equality in intelligence .....	8
3.4 Equality in partnerships.....	9
3.5 Equality analysis to understand needs and impacts .....	10
3.6 Equality in financial planning.....	11
3.7 Equality in procurement and commissioning.....	12
4.0 The Council as an employer .....	13
4.1 Recruitment and selection .....	13
4.2 Pay and benefits .....	14
4.3 Managing employees.....	14
4.4 Workforce monitoring.....	15
4.5 Employee policies and procedures .....	15
4.6 Employee development .....	17
4.7 Dismissal/redundancy.....	17
4.8 Employee equality allies .....	18
5.0 Reviewing equality progress .....	19
5.1 Scheme and objective.....	19
6.0 Partnership examples of our principles in action.....	20
6.1 Safer Sunderland Partnership.....	20
6.2 Health and Wellbeing Board .....	21
6.3 Economic Leadership Board.....	24
6.4 Education Leadership Board.....	26
6.5 Cross-partnership work.....	27
6.6 Influencing the city .....	28
Appendix 1: Legal context.....	30
Appendix 2: Equality objective and outputs .....	32
Appendix 3: Engagement.....	34

## 1.0 Introduction

The council is committed to ensuring people in Sunderland fulfil their potential and be the best they can be. Our Equality Scheme sets out what we want to achieve in equalities through our equality objective and demonstrates how we are meeting the general and specific equality duties placed on the public sector by the Equality Act 2010<sup>1</sup>. The Scheme provides information on the arrangements we have in place to ensure consideration of the nine protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and marriage and/or civil partnership, underpinning all that we do in order to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

We welcome the benefits of an inclusive city and a diverse population: different cultures, faiths, beliefs, backgrounds, skills, abilities and preferences. A rich and vibrant mix of people contributes to building culture and innovation. Evidence increasingly suggests that this in turn boosts economic growth. We want to celebrate diversity and continue to build on the progress already made in Sunderland.

Our approach to equality recognises that disadvantage and discrimination take a variety of forms. The range of protected characteristics illustrates the many ways in which an individual could face discrimination. However, we recognise that discrimination can also be based on other factors such as, but not exclusively, people living in poverty, single parent households, people with caring responsibilities, ex-armed forces and ex-offenders. Some people may therefore face multiple forms of discrimination and inequality at different points in their life.

Promoting equality of opportunity does not mean that we will treat everyone the same way. It means that we recognise that people from different backgrounds and in different circumstances may have needs that require different ways of being met. An approach which seeks to treat everyone the same would not achieve our aspiration for a more equal city, in which people have the opportunity to fulfil their aspirations for a healthy, safe and prosperous future.

This scheme is aligned to the council's Corporate Plan (2016-2020) and Towards 2020, which looks at the future of the council. Through ensuring our

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<sup>1</sup> The legal context to the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is contained within Appendix 1.

approach to equality is embedded in the highest level of our planning and decision making we can make sure that all we do as a council has equality considerations embedded. The Corporate Plan commits to decision making that is robust because it is intelligence-based. We will ensure that we measure the right things to understand and address the inequality of health, wealth and opportunity within the city.

## **2.0 Arrangements for delivering equality**

We have robust governance arrangements and sound processes to actively promote equality of opportunity for all.

### **2.1 People responsible for equality**

Everyone is responsible for equality within the council. However, the key responsibilities in relation to ensuring equality are as follows:

- The Deputy Leader of the council has portfolio responsibility for equality and diversity, including lead equality and diversity role for elected members.
- Cabinet takes collective responsibility for scrutinising the equality impact of decisions.
- The Chief Officers Group has operational responsibility for ensuring analysis of equality impacts is undertaken and is present during decision making.
- The Director of Strategy, Partnerships and Transformation is the Chief Officer equality champion.
- The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development has responsibility for workforce diversity issues, as well as employee engagement.
- The Head of Law and Governance considers Cabinet Reports prior to decision-making.
- The Policy, Partnerships and Communications Service provides strategic support and advice to council services with regard to equality issues. The service also co-ordinates partnership work on equalities and community tension monitoring, ensuring strong links between community issues and policy development.
- Eight Lead Equality Champions are responsible for championing different areas of equality at a senior level within our workplaces.
- Employee Equality Advisors offer informal advice to employees on equality issues.

### **2.2 Groups promoting equality**

Working in partnership is vital to our approach to equality. We work with residents, employees and partner organisations within the city and at a regional level to ensure we understand and are tackling equality issues. Partnership activity to support equality includes:

- Facilitating Equality Forums covering different communities of interest and identity. The Equality Forums meet regularly to discuss concerns, opportunities for joint working and consultations from an equality perspective. They engage with all partners, including the council.
- The Sunderland Partnership's Inclusive Communities Group debates and addresses equality and diversity issues across the Partnership, including issues arising from the Equality Forums. Issues that are unable to be resolved can be further escalated to the Sunderland Partnership Board.
- The Hate Incident Monitoring Group, Refugee and Asylum Group and Equality Forums inform our understanding of tensions within the community that may impact on community cohesion.
- A monthly cohesion group monitors information from the police regarding tensions across the city. The group discusses how issues may need to be addressed through a range of different council services.
- Civic Mediation Practitioners consider potential issues of community cohesion to determine whether they can work to resolve issues.
- The council is represented on a regional equalities network. This helps the council ensure it is up to date with, and influencing, regional as well as local issues.
- The council works with the Police Independent Advisory Group which provides a forum for representatives of people with protected characteristics to discuss issues with the police and other public sector agencies.
- An employee Supporting Equality Network influences practice in the workplace, provides mutual support to colleagues, and is consulted on issues effecting workplace equality.
- The Children and Young People's Advisory Group includes the statutory Change Council (young people in care), Sunderland Youth Parliament, Sunderland Young Inspectors, City Equals (young people with learning difficulties or disabilities) and representatives from schools and youth projects across the city.
- Healthwatch Sunderland is an independent consumer champion for all that use health and social care services. It ensures everyone has a voice in the way local services are planned and delivered.
- We also tap into a range of other resources depending on the topic in question, for example Carer's Forums, 50+ Forums, Sunderland Armed Forces Network and Veterans and Armed Forces Forum.

### **2.3 Mechanisms promoting equality**

We have a number of mechanisms that enable us to embed and promote equality in all that we do:

- An intelligence-led Equality Analysis process includes guidance to ensure the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is considered at all

stages of our work, and a template to record resulting findings and actions.

- An [Equality Code of Practice](#) was collaboratively developed to reflect the relationship between equality forums, voluntary and community sector organisations and other partner organisations, including the council.
- Annual completion of the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index (and a good practice share with Together for Children who complete the Stonewall Education Equality Index).
- A translation, interpretation and transcription framework (a list of pre-approved suppliers) to ensure services can book face to face interpretation, telephone interpretation, and translation and transcription as and when they are required.
- A [Hate Incident Monitoring \(HIM\)](#) system that enables reporting and recording of hate incidents categorised as motivated by culture, race, religion, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, or disability. The information captured is used to help support victims of hate incidents and, where possible and appropriate, ensure action is taken against perpetrators through the relevant agencies. When an incident is reported to HIM a risk assessment is undertaken to determine the response required. The system is being further developed to ensure that the information captured on the HIM system can be analysed to map trends across the city and, if appropriate, direct resources to an area where more incidents are occurring. It can also be used in conjunction with other data to determine whether there is under-reporting.

### **3.0 Equality throughout our work**

We believe that in order to have a true impact on equality, it must be a consideration of all of our day to day work, from our initial contact with customers to strategic plans and everything in between.

#### **3.1 Equality in customer service**

Our approach to customer service has the customer at its heart, with a focus on accessibility, responsiveness and quality of all services from the viewpoint of:

- Help me quickly, courteously and professionally.
- Get it right first time.
- Give me what I need (not necessarily what I want).
- Include me, and give me choice.

One of the overarching customer service principles is accessibility, acknowledging that the range of ways to access a service must allow choice

and convenience and not exclude or unfairly disadvantage anyone. Ensuring we do not disadvantage anyone requires a good understanding of the people who use, or could use a service to make sure our services are delivered from the perspective of the customer or service-user's needs.

We seek to ensure accessibility of services through a range of mechanisms:

- Customer Service Centres have been designed in accordance with disability standards and guidelines and have hearing loops as standard.
- The Customer Service Centre in the city centre includes an adult changing place, height adjustable desks and accessible PCs.
- Telephone services are provided via Minicom and BT Typetalk, and Short Message Service (SMS) is used to facilitate access for hearing impaired customers through text based services.
- Our website meets accessibility standards and has 'Read Me' facility which converts text to speech and allows font size and colours to be customised.

The Complaints and Customer Feedback Service monitor trends in customer views gained from feedback, including equality issues. It works with other services to ensure continuous learning from both compliments and complaints is embedded within service delivery arrangements.

### **3.2 Equality in strategic planning**

Addressing inequality is at the heart of our Corporate Plan (2016-20). The plan acknowledges the importance of ensuring people have the opportunity to fulfil their aspirations and potential. All of our key priorities are underpinned by intelligent decision making, effective delivery and robust performance management arrangements to achieve the best possible outcomes. This is one of the ways in which we aim to address inequalities of health, wealth and opportunity in the city. It is within the context of being intelligence led and tackling barriers to people fulfilling their potential, that we embed equality throughout the work of the council.

All service plans are aligned with the Corporate Plan. Services must consider the aims of the PSED in producing their service plans, including defining how their plans impact on equality related issues.

### **3.3 Equality in intelligence**

Knowledge of the demographics of Sunderland is important to understanding differences in communities, differences in need and potential inequalities or barriers that people face. We believe the most effective way of ensuring we promote equality in our work, is to ensure that equality intelligence is routinely examined. We have made a commitment to embed an intelligence led



approach across the organisation and with partners. This means we aim to use data and information more effectively to improve decision making and outcomes. Robust intelligence, including understanding inequalities, is essential in enabling us to direct resources to where they are most needed. This approach is central to our Corporate Plan and the principles informing our approach to the future council. Our Equality Analysis process is intentionally designed to encourage maximum consideration of the intelligence available, so that decision makers are able to focus on the PSED.

We publish information about our city and our people on our [website](#). This helps to inform our general understanding of equalities and supports services who give further specific consideration of equalities intelligence relevant to their service area, for example through needs assessments. This intelligence approach underpins planning, service review, partnership working, needs assessment, commissioning and the way we understand the impact of all that we do.

### **3.4 Equality in partnerships**

As the council reduces in size and changes in shape, we recognise the importance of collaborative working for the benefit of the people of Sunderland. An important part of this collaboration is joint understanding of issues, with both our partners and our communities (for examples see section 6).

The Sunderland Strategy (2008-2025) sets out the aims the Sunderland Partnership wants to achieve on behalf of the city and sets the direction of the work of the partnership boards. This includes key strategic partnerships for Economy, Health and Wellbeing, Education and Community Safety, and their associated delivery plans. The Sunderland Partnership Manager works closely with the council's Policy, Partnerships and Communications Service. Policy officers within the service provide direct policy support to each of the strategic partnership boards, as appropriate. Ensuring equality intelligence contributes to the delivery plans of the boards is essential. In addition, the Partnership Agreements set out commitments in relation to equality and the appropriate boards have signed up to these commitments.

The Sunderland Partnership also supports residents, through Equality Forums, to engage with the council and partner organisations and influence decision-making in the city. The Equality Forums meet on a regular basis to discuss concerns and opportunities for joint working. The current Equality Forums are:

- The Disability Independent Advisory Group (DIAG).
- Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Forum.
- Sunderland Interfaith Forum.

Together for Children supports the Children and Young People's Advisory Group and associated consultation and engagement mechanisms for children and young people. The council also links with other groups including the BME Network, refugee and asylum seekers, and 50+ Forums/older people champions managed by Age UK, Sunderland.

An Inclusive Communities Group provides an opportunity for the equality forums to escalate key issues directly for decision making and action. The group ensures strong links between community issues and policy development.

### **3.5 Equality analysis to understand needs and impacts**

We aim to understand needs, impacts and outcomes, with an emphasis on creating positive impacts for the city, in all that we do. This is particularly relevant when shaping, facilitating and commissioning services and as we continue to consider future models and options for service delivery. The nature of the service dictates how these considerations are made. For example, Public Health carries out detailed needs assessments to inform understanding of an issue, to form the basis of service review and/or to inform commissioning. More generally, we use Equality Analysis to provide a framework for our considerations. This consists of a guidance document and template that is reflected in standard project methodology and used as a measure of how well we take forward significant and complex projects. Equality Analysis guidance enables us to focus on how a proposal, policy, service or decision could impact on the three aims of the PSED<sup>2</sup>. This is accompanied by a simple recording template on which information relating to impacts, and corresponding actions are noted and presented. The analysis covers the nine protected characteristics defined by the law and encourages further consideration of other groups who face potential additional challenges. The groups impacted upon may vary depending on nature of the service or proposal, but we are particularly aware of the significant impact and cross-cutting nature of economic deprivation and poverty for the city.

Quality analysis of impacts ensures that, when complex decisions are being made, we have an understanding of the corporate and city-wide view of equality impacts. Equality Analyses are required as part of the decision papers for Cabinet and therefore are published with the papers on the council's Committee Management System (CMIS).

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<sup>2</sup> The aims of the PSED are described in Appendix 1.

An important element of Equality Analysis is to enable residents, communities, businesses and partners to contribute their views. We involve and engage with partners and a range of stakeholders, for example Voluntary and Community Sector organisations, Equality Forums, residents registered on our consultation database and the council's employee Supporting Equality Network. This engagement activity contributes to our Equality Analyses, in assessing the impact of what we do for people with protected characteristics. To enable this type of analysis it is sometimes necessary to collect monitoring data as we consult and engage. This allows us to understand whether our approach is suitable for people with protected characteristics. For instance, whether:

- consultation has been inclusive;
- a different approach is needed to allow people to give their views;
- there are differing views among different groups; and/or
- proposals could impact on one group more than another.

In order to ensure consultation is as effective as possible, we are reviewing our approach to consultation, including maximising use of an electronic portal through which to inform and consult residents. We will determine ways to ensure people who typically have less access to electronic communications are not excluded. We will be exploring whether there is opportunity to do this collaboratively with organisations comprising the Sunderland Partnership.

### **3.6 Equality in financial planning**

Our approach to financial planning includes clear recognition of the importance of equality. Given the current challenging financial context, Equality Analysis becomes even more essential in taking effective financial decisions to meet the needs of our diverse communities and address our legal obligations. The need to achieve additional savings in response to reduced resources has, and will continue to result in changes to the way many services are delivered. Equality considerations must therefore help inform and shape the development and implementation of proposals.

Throughout the annual budget-setting process, each directorate initially considers the relevance of the PSED to their proposals and the potential impacts. As proposals develop, and where it is appropriate and timely, an Equality Analysis is completed. The results of Equality Analysis and an overview of the impact of all of the proposals is shared with decision-makers and updated throughout the process. Where appropriate, the Equality Analysis is updated as part of further project development.

This approach ensures that information is used to analyse the potential impact of proposals at an early stage of the process. It also enables later refinement

and additions to the analysis to provide a fuller understanding of the impact as the proposal is developed and further information becomes available.

### **3.7 Equality in procurement and commissioning**

It is a key priority for the council to be an intelligent commissioner. We recognise that analysis of need, including understanding of inequalities, underpins the entire commissioning process. Intelligence informs scoping and specification and therefore influences, and creates rationale, for what is finally implemented and monitored. In addition, through intelligently shaping of commissioning intentions and spending power, there is scope to influence other organisations to advance equality through their policies, in their workplaces and through their service delivery.

With procurement being a key part of the commissioning cycle, it is important that equality is also addressed within our procurement practices. The law states that the authority retains responsibility for meeting the equality duty, even if a function is carried out by an external supplier. Appropriate procurement processes and subsequent contractual arrangements are therefore essential to comply with the law.

Once it has been decided to procure a service externally, the council's "Equality and Diversity Procedure for Procurement" is followed to ensure equality considerations are embedded into the procurement procedure from the outset. Initially relevance of equality to the contract is assessed. Any contracts relating to client, customer, employee or service relations are rated as medium or high. Medium and high risk contracts, as a minimum have a related Equality Analysis.

For all tenders, a Selection Questionnaire must be completed which scrutinises whether any findings of unlawful discrimination have been made against potential suppliers and whether complaints have been upheld on grounds of alleged unlawful discrimination. All contracts also have minimum equality related requirements.

If the contract is medium risk, organisations are expected to demonstrate that their policies meet the council's standards and will be willing to work with the council to improve them if it is deemed necessary. There are additional contract requirements to ensure that organisations are, for example, training their employees and managers, keeping up to date with equality legislation, monitoring and meeting need, and monitoring complaints. These requirements are then managed in accordance with the supplier relationship management and contract management framework.

Finally, for high risk contracts, in addition to the requirements for medium contracts, the organisations are also expected to demonstrate a detailed understanding of how the contract can contribute to the aims of the PSED for all protected characteristics. They are required to detail how they will ensure they understand the needs of their service users and how they will meet those needs.

#### **4.0 The Council as an employer**

The council is an equal opportunities employer and is determined to ensure that no applicant or employee receives unfavourable treatment or is disadvantaged in any way on the grounds of, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or pregnancy and maternity. We do not tolerate discrimination, bullying or harassment. All of the council's employment policies are interpreted and applied in line with our commitment to equality and diversity.

In the same way that we recognise and value the diversity of people living in the city, we also understand the benefits that having a diverse workforce can bring, and we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all employees. We understand that having a workforce with a wider range of skills, backgrounds, ages, experiences and attitudes means we will have an organisation that is more responsive to our community, more adaptable to change and more flexible.

#### **4.1 Recruitment and selection**

Policies and procedures are in place to embed accessibility and fairness throughout recruitment processes. In particular, the Recruitment and Selection Code of Practice provides generic guidance for those with responsibility for undertaking recruitment and includes key areas for

consideration to ensure that the process is fully accessible and non-discriminatory. Information regarding equality and diversity is also gathered through the recruitment process.

We use a strengths based approach to create a fair and impartial process for developing job profiles and shortlisting potential candidates through a matching process. This is based on individual strengths through an online assessment that considers how an employee will fit into certain work environments, how they will work with other people and how they will cope with different job requirements. The assessment is composed of three parts: verbal reasoning, numerical reasoning and personality. The use of strengths matching aims to create a fair and impartial process. We also ensure that employees responsible for recruitment and selection are trained in unconscious bias and questioning skills to remove any possibility of discrimination as far as possible. Where services are moving to delivery through different organisations we influence those organisations to adopt similar good practice.

#### **4.2 Pay and benefits**

We undertook a review of pay and grading in 2015 which modernised and simplified the council's approach to pay and reward with the intention of:

- Ensuring fairness by demonstrating that all employees are valued equally and receive appropriate financial recognition for their work.
- Ensuring the application of pay and reward is consistent, clear and meets the objectives of equal pay legislation.

This was applied to all employees and analysis of the impact of the new pay and grading structure in terms of equality was a fundamental element of the review. Pay gaps continue to be monitored through the Corporate Workforce Equality and Diversity Report (see 4.4).

#### **4.3 Managing employees**

Understanding and promoting equality is an important part of a manager's role within the council. During the manager recruitment process (internally and externally) candidates must demonstrate their understanding of, and adherence to, the council's values of being Proud, Decent and Together.

With respect to diversity and inclusion, psychometric testing is used in conjunction with the interview process to determine whether candidates are:

- fair, decent and compassionate;
- engage with, listen to and value every person as an individual;
- embrace difference and value everyone's unique contribution; and are
- committed to equality and diversity and how they would apply it to the role.

Additional talent assessment tools are used in the recruitment and selection of senior managers, for example in an Executive Scenarios assessment. This work simulation exercise helps to build a picture of how a candidate relates, communicates and engages with other people, ensuring that the managers we appoint at all levels are equipped to manage and support diverse groups of employees.

Managers are expected to refer to a range of policies and procedures to help them support individuals' needs, including making adjustments in the workplace to enable disabled employees (or prospective employees) to fulfil their potential.

#### **4.4 Workforce monitoring**

As an intelligence-led council we recognise the importance of understanding our workforce. Data is held on the secure Human Resources/payroll system and so can only be accessed by human resources employees. Information is not used on an individual basis, but is analysed to help us comprehend the make-up of the workforce and the opportunities different groups' access. For example, we can assess who is accessing training and career progression opportunities. It also helps us to better understand how the decisions we make impact upon different groups within our workforce.

We collect and publish equality information on our workforce in our annual [Corporate Workforce Equality & Diversity Report](#). The report provides a profile of the council's workforce, and sets out information by the nine 'protected characteristics' in equality law: age, race, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership; as well as by caring responsibilities. However, the level of information we hold on our workforce is low making it difficult to analyse and to use the information effectively. Work is planned to improve monitoring information to resolve this.

#### **4.5 Employee policies and procedures**

As a supportive and flexible employer, the council recognises the importance of working together with employees to support individual needs. This is both compatible with, and beneficial to, business efficiency. We recognise that getting this balance right can be key to ensuring that employees can perform well at work, and feel engaged and valued. All of the council's employment policies and procedures are consistent with our commitment to equality and diversity. This can be especially important for the provisions relating to family life, to ensure that all types of families, households and domestic arrangements are properly recognised and supported. Therefore, we have developed a package of policies and support for employees which are set out

in our employee handbook. The elements that are particularly relevant to equality include:

- Flexible Working – there are a range of available options including flexi time, career breaks, the purchase of additional annual leave, compressed working hours, annualised hours, job share and part year working.
- Leave of Absence Policy – this includes carer leave, emergency time off to care for dependents, compassionate leave, bereavement leave, and entitlements for religious and cultural observances.
- Maternity, Adoption and Family Friendly Policies, including Paternity and Shared Parental Leave and Pay.
- Childcare Voucher Scheme to assist our employees with childcare costs.
- Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy - this supports victims regardless of gender whilst still recognising that domestic abuse is largely a gendered crime.
- Domestic and Sexual Violence Champions in the workplace.
- Occupational Health Services including counselling, physiotherapy and health promotion.
- Coaching services.
- Stress management support.
- Attendance Management Policy.
- In-house mediation.
- Wellness consultant.
- Access to a private Prayer and Reflection Room for use in the employees' own time.
- Supporting Non-Binary, Trans and Transitioning Employees in the Workplace policy and guidance. .
- Performance Management (Appraisal) Framework.
- Access to reasonable adjustments.
- Agile working arrangements.
- Trade unions, which may include access to support arrangements (e.g. financial advice).
- Guidance for managers who are concerned about a distressed or suicidal employee at work

We also have policies and procedures to help employees understand they are expected to behave in a way that supports equality, dignity and respect and to deal with those who do not behave in a way that promotes equality.

Employees must sign an Employee Code of Conduct that makes it clear they should treat residents and fellow employees with fairness and equality and they should observe the council's policies in relation to this. Any unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation can be dealt with through the following policies and procedures:

- Code of Conduct.



- Disciplinary Procedure.
- Grievance Procedure.
- Whistle Blowing.

Other employment practices that promote equality include:

- Gaining the Two Ticks “Positive about Disabled People” accreditation and using the symbol in all recruitment.
- Teenagers to Work Programme - placements for young people with a learning or physical disability, or who are leaving care.
- Apprenticeships and work placements.
- Stonewall Diversity Champion, including completion of their Workplace Equality Index benchmarking exercise.

#### **4.6 Employee development**

The council offers an Employee Development Programme which has three main aims:

- Ensuring that all employees have access to the support and development that they need in order to perform their job role.
- Supporting behaviours and values which are consistent with the council’s values of ‘Proud – Decent – Together’ and which result in every employee feeling valued, engaged and involved.
- Promoting Customer Service excellence for both ‘external’ and ‘internal’ customers and taking account of any individual needs.

The programme includes on-line resources for employees as well as traditional training activities, and 1:1 or team coaching. The Sunderland Leadership Programme that aims to ensure all leaders are working to the Council’s expectations around leadership incorporates and promotes equality and diversity. As we improve our employee monitoring data, we will be able to analyse whether any particular groups are less likely to take up the opportunities available and act accordingly. We are also developing a refreshed package of e-learning that aims to promote understanding of equality and diversity for all employees, with specific information tailored to managers and those responsible for recruitment and selection. All employees are expected to complete the e-learning assessment to check their level of understanding. Level of attainment at the assessment point will determine the refresher training date. Those who demonstrate lower levels of attainment at assessment will be required to refresh the e-learning module within 6 months.

#### **4.7 Dismissal/redundancy**

We have been responding to an on-going requirement to reduce the size of our workforce due to external funding reductions since 2010/2011, and this is forecast to continue each year until at least 2020. To date almost all of our

workforce reductions have been achieved on a voluntary basis using early retirement and voluntary severance, but compulsory redundancies are likely to become more common. We monitor the effect of large scale employee reductions and tight restrictions on external recruitment across the organisation. Our redundancy policy and procedure, which sets out how consultation and selection are done, seeks to ensure that employment and equality legislation is complied with and good practice is always used. We will continue to ensure that selection criteria do not produce discriminatory outcomes; this will continue to be monitored for all redundancy dismissals.

#### **4.8 Employee equality allies**

We have a number of equality allies who make themselves visible by using a 'supporting equality' logo in their email signature, wearing a lanyard with the logo and/or wearing a pin badge. These are predominantly made up of Equality Champions, Supporting Equality Network members, Equality Advisors and Coaches. Members of our Chief Officer Group also wear a 'supporting equality' lanyard and/or pin badge.

Equality Champions are senior managers who take on a role of championing equality issues across the characteristics of age; disability; race; religion or belief; gender; lesbian, gay bisexual and trans; and military personnel and veterans. In addition, we have a Chief Officer Group champion. The champions commit to considering equality in managing the workforce and running services; being a mentor and being mentored by others to gain greater understanding of equality issues; being open to hearing what challenges employees are facing in relation to equality; and being an ally to other Equality Champions.

Our Supporting Equality Network was set up to add value to the equality work of the council and aims to:

- Advise the council on issues of equality and diversity, contributing to council policy development, and raising awareness and understanding across the organisation.
- Offer a confidential advice and support network for staff, providing a safe and supportive space to raise and discuss equality related issues.
- Contribute to employee development by promoting training and learning opportunities.
- Represent, or seek to represent the views of people covered by the nine protected equality characteristics.
- Recognise the additional needs of other groups such as, but not limited to, carers, ex-armed forces, and people more than one of the protected equality characteristics.
- Connect with the city's Equality Forums for mutual activity and benefit.

Some of our Supporting Equality Network members have undertaken training to enable them to become Equality Advisors. They are an additional and

informal route for employees to speak to someone confidentially and sensitively about equality issues. This could include anything from concerns about bullying and harassment to a conversation about the range of support available.

Finally, we have a coaching service that supports managers, teams and individuals on a whole range of development areas. Working with a coach is an important part of the Sunderland Leadership Programme and allows the individual to develop skills, values and behaviours that are integral to the organisation, whilst assisting them to reflect on their performance both in the work place and on a personal level. Coaches take on the role of Equality Ally in their role description because they are in an ideal position to have sensitive discussions with a range of individuals.

## **5.0 Reviewing equality progress**

### **5.1 Scheme and objective**

Progress on the objectives set out in our first Equality Scheme (2012-16) has been updated annually on our website. Since the Equality Scheme was published in 2012 the context within which the council is working has changed dramatically. Our focus has evolved from looking at what we can do to promote equality through council service delivery, to looking at where we can have the biggest influence on reducing inequalities in the city; whether this is through our role in shaping services, as a commissioner, as a partner or as an employer. It is essential that all of this work is underpinned by good quality intelligence.

Our current equality objective is:

#### **Maximise the collection and use of quality data and intelligence to support effective equality policy and practice.**

This objective and its associated milestones are set out in appendix 2. They demonstrate how we are working as a council and with partners to deliver the best equality outcomes for the city. The measures are incorporated into the corporate delivery plan which is monitored through monthly performance clinics. Progress on our objectives will be published on our website annually.

This Equality Scheme will be reviewed and amended at least every four years or following any relevant changes in the law and Government guidance. It will also be reviewed following any significant changes to council structures or key partnership structures, where relevant, to ensure that necessary mechanisms for implementation, monitoring and review are in place and reflected in the scheme. At each review employees of the council, members of the public and

partner organisations will be consulted to ensure that the scheme continues to meet their needs and expectations.

## **6.0 Partnership examples of our principles in action**

Each of the partnership boards have their own delivery plans and review these independently. They are influenced by equality intelligence where appropriate. The following case studies demonstrate how our use of intelligence has led to improvements in addressing inequalities through partnership based policy, commissioning and delivery.

### **6.1 Safer Sunderland Partnership**

The work of the Safer Sunderland Partnership is informed by an annual Partnership Strategic Intelligence Assessment (PSIA). This examines what has been done to improve community safety and looks at how the levels and patterns of crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour and offending have been changing in the city. Some of the available data on victims, offenders and locations can be data broken down by protected characteristics. Anecdotal evidence is also taken into account in influencing the work. Examples of where this has worked effectively include producing victim profiles for domestic abuse, which then influences provision by shaping commissioning intentions. So, for example, the main focus of provision is for women, as the data evidences that this is still a largely gendered crime, and that women are both the largest victim group and also experience more frequent and more severe abuse. This is also reflected nationally through the Crime Survey for England and Wales. However, men are also victims and so providers must also have provision for men.

#### **Case Study 1: Increasing domestic violence reporting**

Intelligence indicated that there is under-reporting of domestic violence within lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) relationships and also amongst the over 55 age range. In response to LGBT under reporting, a partnership approach was taken (led by Northumbria Police) to a 'Walking on Eggshell's' marketing campaign aimed at encouraging reporting of domestic violence. This was also adapted and re-designed using different messaging to specifically target LGBT people. In addition, the city's network of domestic and sexual violence champions (which includes council employees) have been trained around awareness of domestic abuse in LGBT relationships and the additional barriers the LGBT community may face. The training utilised the North East Domestic Abuse Project's 'Love should never be abusive' resource and films specifically developed around all four stands of LGBT. Furthermore, an employee with a specific interest in LGBT issues has been trained as a domestic violence champion.

A further campaign was specifically targeted at raising awareness of and

encouraging reporting of domestic abuse in older people's relationships. The campaign 'In sickness and in health' has resulted in an increase in reporting by domestic abuse victims aged 55+. A 'train the trainer' package is also being developed for multi-agency use. These campaigns were both public and employee facing. There has also been a small increase in male reporting, but further investigation is needed to understand whether this is due to LGBT reporting, or whether it is a separate rise in heterosexual male reporting.

Operation Encompass focusses on the impact of domestic abuse on children and went live in all schools in the city in April 2017. If a child is present when an incident of domestic abuse has been attended by the police, this is reported into the Integrated Contact and Referral Team who, in turn, notifies the safeguarding lead in schools so that the child can be supported whilst they are in school.

#### **Case Study 2: Tackling anti-social behaviour**

Intelligence from the PSIA has previously led to some focussed work on reducing alcohol related anti-social behaviour amongst young people, through Operation Gryphon. The work sets out an escalation approach to ensure the behaviour is dealt with appropriately. New intelligence suggesting that anti-social behaviour is no longer primarily focussed on young people and alcohol is leading to Operation Gryphon being expanded to all age groups and a wider range of associated anti-social behaviour issues.

### **6.2 Health and Wellbeing Board**

One of the principles of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy is equity "everyone is able to achieve their full health potential regardless of their personal circumstances." The approach to health and wellbeing recognises the inequalities in relation to alcohol, obesity and smoking and aims to address the factors that have a wider impact on health, education, housing, employment, and environment and address these proportionately across the social gradient. Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs) provide the council and our partners with the information we need to agree priorities and inform commissioning intentions. We publish all our JSNAs on the council's website.

#### **Case Study 3: Live Life Well**

The Integrated Wellness Service (which is now called Live Life Well) has been re-commissioned using an intelligence led approach. Services aimed at reducing lifestyle factors damaging to health, such as smoking, drinking alcohol and lack of physical activity were originally delivered in response to

each specific issue.

The new approach is more holistic focussing on the person, rather than individual service. The commissioning was based upon significant consultation and engagement that explored the reasons that people don't engage with existing services in order to understand the unmet need. The result is a service bespoke to the individual, where one referral route can result in a tailored response to a variety of issues. Recognising the complexity of people's lives, and responding in an integrated way is far more effective and has been nationally recognised as a good approach.

#### **Case Study 4: Changing behaviours**

We are piloting approaches to encourage people to shift behaviours in a way that will improve theirs and their family's health and life chances.

##### **Take up of free early education entitlements**

There is a national commitment to provide free early education for disadvantaged two year olds with the aim of reducing attainment gaps. We have initiated a behaviour change pilot with the intention of improving take up of the early education offer. The work brought a range of professionals together, identified system improvements and explored opportunities to encourage behaviour change.

System improvements have involved simplifying communications and streamlining the data processing and capture. Frontline workers have collaborated to agree ways to improve the approach which led to improved clarity, feel and tone of communications and promotional materials:

- childcare vouchers that used family friendly language and simple imagery explaining entitlements;
- appointment cards using the same visual approach; and
- scripts and a supporting toolkit for key workers that help parents see the benefits of early education using behaviour insights language.

The aim is that the communications have positive outcomes through:

- demonstrating many parents are already taking up the offer and that children play and make friends;
- demonstrating that there is reward for the parents as well as the children, and that they can avoid their child missing out. This results in parents becoming emotionally engaged; and
- making it easy by starting with the assumption that parents will take-up places and making contact with the nursery easy for them.

### **Reducing smoking in pregnancy**

Smoking in pregnancy poses significant health risks to both the mother and baby. In addition to increased risks to the baby (miscarriage, stillbirth, premature birth, low birth weight, foetal growth restriction, neo natal death, and Sudden Unexplained Death in infancy), children born to mothers who smoke are more likely to have behavioural problems, including attention and hyperactivity problems, learning difficulties and reduced educational performance, as well as respiratory problems.

Data for 2015 shows that the Smoking Status at Time of Delivery (SATOD) is high in Sunderland and there's a very large gap between the numbers of women that are SATOD and those that have engaged with Stop Smoking Services. A pilot is taking place that focusses on reducing the number of women that smoke during pregnancy.

The pilot is structured on the existing pathway that a pregnant woman follows. This centres around contact with a midwife who hands the woman over to a Health Care Assistant (HCA) for further advice and encouragement over the course of the pregnancy. Analysis of the pathway identified key points at which midwives and HCAs could act more quickly to provide advice and assistance to the mum-to-be. The pilot also gave the opportunity to provide both midwives and HCAs with scripting to use when speaking with mums-to-be. These scripts were designed in a way that made it easier for them to talk about giving up smoking and included a wide range of behavioural effects.

Materials were also provided to help reinforce the messages being made by the HCAs:

- A map of the city has been produced that shows how many pregnant women have quit smoking while pregnant during the 12 months prior to the pilot. It is covered in dots, each one representing a pregnant mum-to-be that has quit smoking. The map shows how normal quitting is and makes the message much more salient
- A wallet for the Nicotine Replacement Therapy prescription form is now given to the mum-to-be. This helps give the form value and also has a commitment device on the reverse, where mum-to-be can 'sign up' to say she will use one or more of the techniques shown to help her efforts to quit.

The scripting and materials were not designed to force or persuade the mum-to-be to quit smoking, instead they were specifically designed to demonstrate that quitting smoking while pregnant was normal, natural and commonplace. The scripting and materials reflected this and established stopping smoking as the default option, cementing quitting as a case of not

whether, but how and when.

At this time the pilot is on-going and so the results of this work are not yet available, however there is anecdotal evidence that the HCAs are busier than ever helping mums-to-be stop smoking. This suggests that the hand-off from midwife to HCA is more effective with more women entering this part of the pathway.

### **Case Study 5: Welfare Reform**

Given the range of on-going welfare reforms and the potential numbers of residents affected by one or more changes, both the council and Health & Well Being Board (HWBB) confirmed that welfare reform was a priority area.

The focus is on three priority areas of digital inclusion, financial inclusion, and crisis support. An action plan was agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board in November 2016. Examples of work undertaken include:

- Developing a multi-agency digital strategy with an action plan concentrating on 6 themes.
- Creating targeted pathways into welfare rights provision for customers (and for specific customer groups) being helped by crisis services.
- Drafting a welfare reform Joint Strategic Needs Assessment to provide a baseline for on-going monitoring and reporting information.
- Using available council intelligence to risk assess households affected by the second phase of the benefit cap and then prioritise support from a number of council services including first tier advice providers.

Further planned activity includes:

- An in-reach programme of activity to increase financial capability and confidence and mitigate the impacts of welfare reform.
- Work with the Food Bank Network to improve information and referral pathways to better support customers in crisis and reduce repeat customers.
- Continue to provide a citywide basic infrastructure for open access benefits and debt support, and also some targeted activity.

### **6.3 Economic Leadership Board**

Much of the work of the Economic Leadership Board aligns with the work of the Education Leadership Board, as outlined below. For both the Economic and Education Leadership Boards, there is a focus on developing individuals to ensure they have the required skills levels and occupational competencies to work in the industries and sectors where there are employment opportunities. In this respect reducing inequalities is important.



The Cultural Partnership, which reports to the Economic Leadership Board also looks at how culture can be made more accessible to everyone and how culture can have a positive impact on physical and mental wellbeing. We recognise that the cultural sector has a critical role to play in developing sense of place and creating vibrancy. It is important to understand how the cultural offer can play a huge part in retaining graduates to slow or reverse the decline in Sunderland's population. Alignment between cultural and economic activities means promotion of culture and creativity is increasingly about economic prosperity and less promotion of culture per se. We recognise that arts and culture is increasingly entwined with initiatives to foster social inclusion, promote mental health and wellbeing and inspire children and young people. Arts and culture can foster and sustain resilience in communities during difficult economic times. For these reasons Sunderland has bid to become the UK City of Culture 2021.

#### **Case Study 6: Encouraging diversity in local employment**

Work Discovery Sunderland is a successful annual programme designed to improve young people's employability and highlight career possibilities. Local and regional employers have the opportunity to showcase the products they make and/or the services they deliver with a view to becoming an employer of choice. The programme aims to be as inclusive as possible by encouraging diversity in local employment. A year-long programme including sector days and guest speaker days aims to encourage students into careers linked with our local industries. There is still very much a need for more people progressing in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM), particularly girls who are less likely to enter higher income careers linked to these subjects. As part of the year-long Work Discovery Sunderland programme, students are encouraged to think beyond traditional gender stereotypes in the workplace:

- Nissan host an annual Girls in Monozukuri Manufacturing and Engineering event (GIMME)
- Farrans, the company contracted to build the new Wear crossing offer a Civil Engineering taster session specifically aimed at girls.
- City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Trust, hold a Health and Care Sector Day offering a range of theory and practical exercises in many aspects of the sector, including nursing and midwifery. These sessions are always well attended by boys as well as girls.

It is recognised that pupils with Special Educational Needs may have a different range of skills to harness. Teachers arrange for their pupils to attend the events that will be most appropriate to their skill sets:

- All of the business visits are inclusive for pupils with Special Educational

Needs and it is noted where improvements can be made to ensure pupils get the most from the sessions in future years.

- Where appropriate, businesses offer separate events.
- A pupil with Autistic Spectrum Disorder with a particular interest in engineering attended a special visit (for competition winners) to Unipres.

### **Case Study 7: Mental Health Trailblazer**

There are strong links between mental health and employment. It is widely recognised that good quality employment has positive mental health impacts and poor mental health negatively impacts employment prospects. The North East Combined Authority (NECA) area has 44,970 residents claiming Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) for a mental or behavioural disorder (February 2015), 10,000 of whom are required to seek work. More may have mental health as a secondary condition. Furthermore, many Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) claimants are also known to have a mental health condition.

There has been a lack of integration between employment and wellbeing interventions and employment support programmes have performed poorly in securing job outcomes for benefit claimants with mental health conditions.

The North East Mental Health Trailblazer aims to inform future national and local support for people with mental health conditions, testing support to boost employment and clinical outcomes, as well as integrated and better sequenced delivery models. It focuses on paid employment only and aims to find employment for people quickly. Intensive, flexible and individualised support are key to the approach with the employment coach co-located and fully integrated into teams delivering Increasing Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) services. Coaches work with the clinical therapists and broker additional support where necessary.

The main outcomes anticipated from the trailblazer are improved job entry rates for people with mental health conditions, better job sustainability rates, benefit off-flows and improved clinical recovery rates.

## **6.4 Education Leadership Board**

The Education Leadership Board wants everyone to have the qualifications, skills, competencies and attributes that enable them to realise their full potential and contribute to the city's economic prosperity. In order to achieve this, work is needed to close attainment gaps and ensure everyone, regardless of background and circumstance has equal access to education, training and employment opportunities. This applies across protected

characteristics but extends beyond to other groups such as vulnerable and disadvantaged children, young people and adults. As noted in 6.3, the work of the Education and Economic Leadership Boards closely align, and both heavily invest in the outcomes of programmes such as Work Discovery Sunderland.

#### **Case Study 8: Improving all children and young people's attainment, ambition and skills**

The work of the Education Leadership Board is complemented by the Children's Strategic Partnership. The Partnership has an ambition that **all** children and young people attain the very best results which will give them the best opportunities to take an active part in the economy and achieve their personal aspirations. One of their six priorities focuses on **all** children and young people doing well at all levels of learning and having ambition and the skills for life.

There is already an understanding of where the key issues are and so plans are in place to either address these issues or gain greater understanding of what can help tackle them:

- Children and young people can be affected when transitioning from one education establishment to another and so a Positive Transitions Programme will be developed for all schools and settings to ensure children are supported at key transitions in their education.
- Many young people disengage from education in between Key Stages 3 and 4, around age 14. There is a commitment to conducting a piece of research to understand why young people, particularly those between Key Stages 3 and 4, disengage from education and act on the findings.
- Vulnerable children and young people need more support to access the curriculum, particularly children and young people who are looked after, have special educational needs and those from low income families. Addressing these inequalities and narrowing the attainment gap by making best use of pupil premium and other resources we have available is important. There is a commitment to learning from those schools that make the best use of Pupil Premium and then rolling out best practice across the city. This will include a review the role of the Virtual School and its impact in narrowing gaps in performance for looked after children.

### **6.5 Cross-partnership work**

#### **Case Study 9: Sunderland becoming an Age Friendly City**

Sunderland became a World Health Organisation (WHO) Age Friendly City in October 2015. This agenda is being pursued by the council in partnership with the Adults Partnership Board, Health and Wellbeing Board and wider partners. The reason for doing this is to explore a range of ways of managing the demands presented by the city's ageing population, as well as share some of the city's existing good practice with other members of the WHO Age Friendly City Global Network.

Like many cities Sunderland is expecting its population to become increasingly aged, with residents aged over 65 projected to increase by 40.7% from 51,900 in 2015 to 73,000 in 2035. The focus of our age friendly work is the 50+ population. It's clear that some activity the council and partners undertake for this target group will also benefit a broader age group, making this activity All Age Friendly. Being an Age Friendly City commits the council and partners to progress a range of WHO themes that will improve the City's physical and social environments which are key determinants of whether people can remain healthy, independent and autonomous long into their old age. Our emerging priorities for action are:

1. Help older people by providing and facilitating meaningful social connections.
2. Support older people with general financial information and guidance.
3. Ensure that events, spaces and places cater for older people and are accessible.
4. Involve older people in decision making which affects their lives.
5. Encourage positive attitudes towards ageing.
6. Ensure inclusive design and all age spaces and places.
7. Provide housing and neighbourhoods designed to suit older people.
8. Ensure the city environment incorporates the needs of older people.
9. Ensure that early intervention and prevention initiatives include older people

Bearing in mind the challenging financial climate, our actions will not rely on additional expenditure, but instead need to focus on incorporating Age Friendly considerations into existing and evolving policies, strategies, and day to day activity / service provision.

## 6.6 Influencing the city

### Case Study 10: Equality Forums

The Sunderland Partnership highlighted the need to ensure disabled access is a greater part of the considerations in the development of streetscape. Examples include more dropped kerbs, allowing more time for people to cross the road at pedestrian crossings, creating greater colour definition between paving, seating and bollards for those with visual impairments and better access to public transport.

The Disability Independent Advisory Group made an important contribution in influencing the design of access in Keel Square, the regeneration of the improvements to High Street West and the Seafront. Members of the group accompanied planners to the sites to discuss current access problems, how they could be remedied and to ensure that similar issues did not arise in future. Discussions with planners have led to two 'Changing Place' facilities being opened as part of the regeneration of the seafront at Seaburn and Roker. Changing Place facilities are designed for people with complex needs to use with their carers and include:

- Height adjustable changing bench
- Ceiling hoist
- Peninsular toilet with space on both sides for carers
- Wheelchair access
- Privacy Screens

A third Changing Place is planned for the first building on the old Vaux site.

## **Appendix 1: Legal context**

### **Equality Act 2010**

The Equality Act 2010 bans unfair treatment and promotes equal opportunities in the workplace and wider society. It provides protection on the basis of nine key “protected characteristics”:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex; and
- sexual orientation.

### **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)**

The Equality Act 2010 introduced the PSED which came into force in 2011. The PSED consists of a General Duty and Specific Duties.

#### **The General Duty**

The General Duty requires public bodies, in the exercise of their functions, to pay due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- 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 who do not (this includes tackling prejudice and promoting understanding)

The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- tackle prejudice, and
- promote understanding.

The general duty applies to age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

### **Specific Duties**

The specific duties require public bodies to be transparent about how they are responding to the Equality Duty. They must publish information to show their compliance with the Equality Duty, at least annually; and set and publish equality objectives at least every four years. Published information must show:

- Conscious consideration of the three aims of the general duty as part of the decision-making process.
- Information relating to people who are affected by policies and practices (e.g. service users).
- Information relating to employees who share protected characteristics (for public bodies with 150 or more employees).

## Appendix 2: Equality objective and outputs

**Our Objective: Maximise the collection and use of quality data and intelligence to support effective equality policy and practice.**

Output	Milestone	Responsibility	Timescale
Increase employee monitoring declaration rates for gender identity (currently 35%), sexual orientation (currently 41%) and religion and belief (currently 41%) to 75%.	Clear workforce monitoring messages are communicated to employees on a cyclical basis, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the purpose of workforce monitoring,</li> <li>- encouraging employees to complete their monitoring forms,</li> <li>- the results of the workforce monitoring exercise,</li> <li>- and actions produced as a result.</li> </ul>	HR&OD	Bi-annual cycle repeated annually to March 2020
	Workforce monitoring exercise carried out and data integrated into SAP	HR&OD	December 2017
Improve understanding of equality in employment, specifically recruitment and retention; training and development; and pay and grading.	Corporate Workforce Equality and Diversity report produced annually and reported to COG	HR&OD	April annually
	Action points to address any issues arising from the workforce diversity analysis reported to COG (and linked with employee survey findings).	HR&OD	May 2018
Determine perceptions and experiences of fairness and equality in the workplace	Restricted note produced of the insight gained through Equality Allies	Supporting Equality Network	December 2017
	Supporting Equality Network involved in shaping the employee survey	HR&OD / Supporting Equality Network	December 2017
	Conduct an employee survey (target 50% response rate)	HR&OD	February 2018
	Action plan in place to address any issues arising from the employee survey and link this with the workforce diversity findings	HR&OD	June 2018
Increase the diversity of people involved in the council's consultation and engagement processes	Increase registrations on the electronic consultation database by 20% (5% per annum to 2021)	Policy, Partnerships and Communications	March 2021
	Review registrations on the electronic consultation database by equality characteristic, and target future registrations to address any under-representation.	Policy, Partnerships and Communications	March 2021
	Transformation projects reviewed to assess appropriateness of engaging with equality forums. This results in an active difference to the project,	Policy, Partnerships and Communications	Quarterly



	where appropriate.	/ Transformation and Projects	
Increase understanding of, and respond to, community tensions	Annual review of council Prevent self-assessment complete	Policy, Partnerships and Communications	October 2018
	City-wide Prevent action plan reviewed and refreshed annually	Policy, Partnerships and Communications	October 2018
	Deliver training to at least 40 people in civic mediation, conflict awareness and 'holding difficult conversations' across a range of organisations.	Policy, Partnerships and Communications	March 2020
	Publish data sets reviewing Sunderland's position in relation to "The Casey Review: A Review Into Opportunity And Integration"	Policy, Partnerships and Communications	September 2017
Council policy and practice maximises the use of equality intelligence to ensure decisions are robust	SSP Delivery Plan is informed by the Partnership Strategic Intelligence Assessment.	Policy, Partnerships and Communications	Annually
	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment refreshed and published online to reflect HWBB priorities and commissioning intentions.	Public Health/Health and Wellbeing Board	December 2019
	All service plans are assessed for evidence of appropriate equality considerations. Recommendations are made and acted upon.	HoS/ Policy, Partnerships and Communications	Annually
	Service review projects are evaluated to ensure detailed equality support is directed to projects with the highest relevance to equality, resulting in robust equality analysis.	Transformation and Projects/HoS/ Policy, Partnerships and Communications	Quarterly.
	Cabinet reports are sampled to evaluate the robustness of accompanying equality analysis. Recommendations are made and acted upon.	HoS/ Policy, Partnerships and Communications	Monthly

### **Appendix 3: Engagement**

The following groups were consulted on this scheme prior to consideration for approval by the council's Cabinet:

- The Sunderland Partnership Inclusive Community Group and associated Equality Forums
- Elected Members via Scrutiny Committee
- The council's employee Supporting Equality Network and Joint Leadership Team
- Sunderland's Voluntary and Community Sector organisations via Area VCS Networks
- Signatories of the Sunderland Compact which includes public and voluntary and community sector organisations
- Trade Unions via the Joint Consultative Forum