

Update on the council's Equality Scheme: 2017-2021

November 2018

Equality Scheme 2017-2021

- The Equality Scheme helps demonstrate compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty
- It goes beyond the 'protected characteristics' to consider issues that are important in our city e.g. poverty, carers and veterans
- It sets out the council's one equality objective, focussed on improving the quality of data and intelligence:

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

- It also sets out the outputs and milestones identified to help achieve this objective



Equality Scheme outputs

1. Increase employee monitoring declaration rates for gender identity (currently 35%), sexual orientation (currently 41%) and religion and belief (currently 41%) to 75%.
2. Improve understanding of equality in employment, specifically recruitment and retention; training and development; and pay and grading.
3. Determine perceptions and experiences of fairness and equality in the workplace.
4. Increase the diversity of people involved in the council's consultation and engagement processes
5. Increase understanding of, and respond to, community tensions.
6. Council policy and practice maximises the use of equality intelligence to ensure decisions are robust

Two workforce data outputs

Output 1: Increase employee monitoring declaration rates for gender identity (previously 35%), sexual orientation (previously 41%) and religion and belief (previously 41%) to 75%.

Output 2: Improve understanding of equality in employment, specifically recruitment and retention; training and development; and pay and grading.

Challenge:

- Useful action planning on the basis of the Corporate Workforce Diversity Report was limited by gaps in data.

Action taken:

- Workforce wide data collection exercise in 2017-18 has improved declaration rates but still below target



Latest workforce data response rates

- Gender identity: 44% response rate
- Sexual orientation: 50% response rate
- Religion / belief: 50% response rate
- All increased but still below target



Output one: Next steps

- A move to Employee Self Serve on the payroll system will allow people to update their own information confidentially
- Ensure key messages about the importance and purpose of monitoring are communicated

Corporate Workforce Diversity Report 1

- As at 31 March 2018 the council employed **4529** people (including maintained schools)
- 71% of the workforce is female (1440 full-time, 1808 part-time)
- 29% of the workforce is male (1026 full-time, 255 part-time)
- 62.44% of the workforce are aged 50 or under; 37.56% are aged 51 or over; 2.14% of the workforce are over 65
- 1.21% of the workforce are from ethnic minority groups



Corporate Workforce Diversity Report 2

- 2.80% of the workforce describe themselves as having a disability
- 0.49% of the workforce declared they are lesbian, gay or bisexual
- 0 workforce have declared themselves to be transgender
- 36.21% of the workforce declared a religion of belief
- 28.20% of the workforce are married or in a civil partnership
- 3.55% of the workforce have caring responsibilities
- The full report compares this data with Sunderland statistics

Output 2: Next steps

- The Corporate Workforce Diversity Report is being restructured and brought in line with other HR information reporting cycles
- The revised structure will produce more comprehensive picture of equality throughout the employee life cycle
- The report will go to Chief Officers Group annually
- The 2018/19 report will reflect on employee survey findings

Output 3: Determine perceptions and experiences of fairness and equality in the workplace

Challenge:

- The Supporting Equality Network raised concerns about the visibility and commitment to equality in their workplaces. Also perceptions of different experiences in different workplaces across the council.

Action taken:

- The Supporting Equality Network were consulted on the content of the staff survey. The survey included a section on fairness and equality.
- Increased communication to ensure visible leadership on key equality issues e.g. Time to Change Employer pledge
- Standing item introduced to the Supporting Equality Network agenda to capture issues occurring in workplaces

Output 3: Next steps

- Continued promotion of equality messages
- Communicate the findings of the Employee Survey 2018 and resulting actions to employees
- Capture any issues raised in the employee Supporting Equality Network and confidentially report to Chief Officer Group if appropriate

Output 4: Increase the diversity of people involved in the council's consultation and engagement processes

Challenge:

- The diversity of respondents to corporate consultations is too low to allow meaningful analysis by equality characteristic

Action taken:

- Consultation system is promoted through a range of channels, resulting in a 13.4% increase in 2017/18
- Engagement with the city's Equality Forums
- Internally, we engage with the Supporting Equality Network
- Commissioned Residents Survey 2018
- Supported young people to become engaged in civic life via Together for Children (e.g.. support to Youth Council and 'Make Your Mark' encouraging voting through schools)

Output 4: Next steps

- The 2018 residents' survey is inviting respondents to register in the council's consultation database
- Continue to review transformation projects on an ongoing basis to ensure city Equality Forums and the employee Supporting Equality network are engaged as appropriate.

Output 5: Increase understanding of, and respond to, community tensions

Challenge:

- To ensure we are using our data and intelligence to its best effect and respond to tensions if and when they arise.

Action taken:

- Support policing campaigns and Joint Engagement Groups
- Monthly cohesion meetings with the Police
- Bi-monthly Police Independent Advisory Groups
- Trained civic mediators and community dialogue sessions
- Routes project – targeted outreach education 13-18 years
- Council and citywide Prevent action plans
- Sunderland analysis of the Casey Review

Output 5: Next steps

- Continue to work in a partnership approach listen to and understand community tensions
- Review strategic and operational arrangements in relation to responses to cohesion issues
- Review the results of the cohesion question in the Residents' Survey

Output 6: Council policy and practice maximises the use of equality intelligence to ensure decisions are robust

Challenge:

- To ensure that equality intelligence considered in the decision making process is as robust as possible in order for decisions to be compliant with the Public Sector Equality Duty

Action taken:

- Refreshing the Corporate Plan – more intelligence led
- Partnership Strategic Intelligence Assessment informs the Safer Sunderland Partnership Delivery Plan
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) suite on the council's website
- Support to develop robust Equality Analysis (e.g. MTFS / Transformation projects)
- Cabinet reports Equality Analysis sampled

Output 6: Next steps

- Refresh the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment to inform a review of the Health and Wellbeing Board's priorities 2019-2024
- Analysis of Residents' Survey 2018 by characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 and other demographic information