



Equality Objectives: Progress Report 2017

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East Staffordshire Borough Council's commitment to equality is stated in our Single Equality Scheme, which was reviewed in 2015. The Scheme and the equality objectives contained within it are based on the Council's legal obligations arising from the Equality Act 2010. The Act sets out the general equality duty, which requires that those subject to the equality duty must, in the exercise of their functions, have 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.

The Equality Act 2010 covers the following protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership (only with regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination)
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The Equality Act also requires the Council to publish information to demonstrate its compliance with the general equality duty, and prepare and publish at least one equality objective which the Council thinks it needs to achieve in order to meet one or more of the general equality duties. East Staffordshire Borough Council identified four equality objectives in our Single Equality Scheme 2015. The four objectives are:

- **Everyone can access our services, facilities and information**
- **Decision making and services are influenced by the needs of residents and communities**
- **Discrimination, harassment and hate crime is not tolerated**
- **Our workforce, and workforce policies, support equality**

East Staffordshire Borough Council has a structure of responsibility for equality, from department to Cabinet level. The Leader of the Council has the equality portfolio, as does one Head of Service. A corporate officer has equality responsibility supported by the Equalities and Health Working Group, which comprises employees from across the Council. Equality is also a standing item on the agenda of the monthly Corporate Management Team meeting.

This report details the progress that East Staffordshire Borough Council has made in meeting our equality objectives.

Objective 1: Everyone can access our services, facilities and information

To support the “advancing [of] equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not”, our aim is for all our services, facilities and information to be accessible to all, and for people to be satisfied with our services and facilities. We aim for the different needs of people to be considered in all aspects of the planning and delivery of our services, facilities and information, and for reasonable adjustments to be made for people with disabilities. We will collect and analyse data from communities to develop our understanding of communities and service users.

Equality Information

The Council collects, analyses and where appropriate publishes equality information from our service users to monitor the take up of services. Information is currently published annually on our website from users of the Meadowside Leisure Centre, Shobnall Leisure Complex, the Sports Development team, Uttoxeter Leisure Centre, the Brewhouse Arts Centre and from anti social behaviour complainants. Equality information is also collected and published from job applicants and our workforce. Information on customer/resident satisfaction is collected by the Leisure Centres, the Brewhouse Arts Centre, the Town Hall, Market Hall, the Open Spaces team and the Sports Development team.

Equality and Health Impact Assessments

The Council’s corporate report template requires the creation and inclusion of an equality and health impact assessment (EHIA) as part of the report, where the report meets the EHIA criteria. Equality and health impact assessments are completed for new and reviewed policies, functions or services, and provide an assessment of the equalities and health impact of a policy or function on different groups. Completed EHIAs are published on our website alongside the relevant report in the Council and Democracy section of the website. The EHIA template includes questions which require the author to detail the evidence base for the EHIA and the consultation undertaken, this may include information from service users and communities. The completion of equality and health impact assessments identified in Service Plans has been monitored quarterly as part of the Corporate Performance Report.

In 2016/17 EHIAs were completed on the following policies and proposals:

- Council Tax Penalties
- Unreasonable Complainants Policy
- Neighbourhood Working Fund
- Procurement Strategy
- Climate Change Policy
- Climate Change Adaption Plan
- Housing Enforcement Policy
- Corporate Enforcement Policy
- Noise Management Policy
- Appeals against Dismissal Policy
- Employment of Related Persons Policy
- Disclosure and Barring Service Procedures

Flexible Working Policy
Home Working Policy
Family Friendly Provisions Policy

Procurement

The updated Procurement Strategy states the Council's commitment to ethical procurement, including a commitment to eliminating both direct and indirect discrimination. The policy states: "within the resources available to it, the Council will provide appropriate, sensitive and accessible services. It will not discriminate on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics of equality." Where appropriate and proportional equality questions are included in procurement processes.

Accessible Communications

The corporate website in the main meets W3C standards and AA accessibility, and the Council uses monitoring software to identify any issues with accessibility. In a recent report East Staffordshire Borough Council ranked 38th out of 406 Councils in a technical website survey, part of which tested accessibility and W3C web standards. The Council's website has a new accessibility bar which allows visitors to change colours and fonts, listen to the text, use a ruler, translate text and other options to assist with the accessibility of the website. In 2016/17 the bar was used by 1,214 unique visitors and had 10,373 total visits.

A new process for procuring translation and interpretation services was introduced in 2017 and was communicated to staff.

Accessible Services

- Providing accessible services is very important to the Council. We offer Changing Places accessible changing rooms at both the Meadowside and Uttoxeter Leisure Centres. Changing Places changing rooms and toilets have extra features and more space in comparison with a standard disabled toilet. This facility makes the Meadowside and Uttoxeter Leisure Centres more accessible for people with disabilities. Both the Meadowside and Uttoxeter Leisure Centres have also achieved Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) Status, a mark of the accessibility of our facilities.
- The Council signed a new three year agreement in 2015 with Disabled Go to provide online access guides to 150 sites across the borough, including restaurants, visitor attractions and hotels. The guides are reviewed each year and pages on East Staffordshire's site were viewed on nearly 4,500 occasions in 2015/16. All East Staffordshire Borough Council's public buildings feature on the website, and detail the accessibility of our premises.
- The Housing Options service is based in a fully accessible building, but will also visit people who are unable to travel in hospital or at other locations. The service is contactable by phone, and operates an out of hours service to respond to homeless emergencies throughout the year. The service also utilises interpreting and translation services if necessary.
- The Environment Team provide support to people with mobility or other issues that make moving their bins for collection difficult via the assisted collections

scheme. The assisted collection scheme provides refuse and recycling collection support for residents who have difficulties with mobility (with temporary or long term injury), illness, disability or who are elderly and who do not live with an able bodied person of 15 years and over. Council staff will collect the bin(s)/bags, empty them and return them to the property. Additional bins can also be requested by households that generate a lot of waste due to having children in nappies or medical waste.

Activities and Services

The Council delivers a wide range of projects and services for residents.

- The CSC in Uttoxeter distributes envelopes of money on behalf of Staffordshire County Council to vulnerable adults (mainly people with learning disabilities) who may otherwise struggle with managing and budgeting their money.
- The Leisure, Sports and Culture team provide a wide range of accessible and tailored sports activities for different audiences. For pre-schoolers activities include: Playday, aqua turtles, Tumble Fun gymnastics, Make it Mondays creative activities and Upbeat: music and movement classes. For older people the activities include: therapeutic gardening, tea dances and the Active Adults programme. Ladies only swimming sessions are offered at Meadowside Leisure Centre and to celebrate International Women's Day in March a number of events were held by Shobnall Leisure Complex, Meadowside Leisure Centre and the Brewhouse Arts Centre aimed at women and girls. There is also an inclusive Cycling facility at Shobnall Leisure Complex.
- The Leisure, Sports and Culture team also run health promotions throughout the year linked to national and international health campaigns including: February Heart Month, Dementia Awareness, Men's Health, Day of the Older Person and the International Day for the Disabled Person.
- The Sports Development team work with local schools, partner organisations and disability gateway clubs to promote and deliver opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in various activities. These activities include: Able Too United, Able Too Albion, Powerchair Football, Inspire Multi-Sport Club and the Able Too Adult Activity Club. The Council will also hold the 'Able Too' games for the 12th year running in 2017, which gives people with a disability the opportunity to try various sports as part of a family orientated day.
- The Brewhouse Arts Centre delivers a range of activities designed for people with particular needs. This includes weekly *ReBalance* sessions which are accessed by older people over the age of 65 with mobility issues. These sessions build strength, balance and coordination, and are particular helpful in falls management, as well as helping to make sure that those with mobility issues aren't isolated. 8 - 15 people take part in the sessions each week.

- *Friendly Fridays* is a new initiative developed by the Brewhouse Arts Centre following the success of the January Live Well sessions aimed at those living with dementia and their carers. On Friday afternoon the Brewhouse shows musicals and other entertaining films in a relaxed screening environment.
- The Brewhouse Arts Centre also delivers an Art Cafe and iDance aimed at adults with additional needs and their carers. Participants can learn new skills in art and dance and make new friends in a social environment. The sessions have been running since September 2016 and are well attended. So far in 2017 56 people have attended the Arts Cafe and 38 have attended iDance. The Brewhouse Arts Centre is also offering free dance classes to girls aged 11-16 linked with the “This Girl Can” campaign. The Brewhouse also offers a dance programme aimed at supporting young people with additional needs through its inclusive club night.
- Last October saw the first “New Generation” event at The Brewhouse, the event programmed as part of UK Older People’s Day coinciding with the UN International Day of Older Persons. The day was a celebration of the achievements and contributions that older people make to society and the economy. Older People’s Day supports the campaign to challenge negative attitudes and outdated stereotypes. The event at the Brewhouse gave over 120 people a platform to share their talents, experiences and achievements and because of its success will be repeated in October 2017.
- In the Open Spaces team the Potting Shed project is mid way through its second year, running in partnership with Fountains High School. The School send six students and two staff members three days a week to the Greenhouse Centre where they run a gardening retail unit called The Potting Shed. This is open to the public and sells plants on behalf of the Council. The students all have a variety of learning disabilities, mental health conditions and The Potting Shed is used to offer vocational training and an alternative to classroom based learning. This approach allows students an element of freedom and the opportunity to develop vocational skills as well as building self confidence, self esteem and social skills. The Council’s horticultural staff offer training workshops and help the students achieve non accredited foundation horticultural certificates, which helps them move on to further education or further vocational projects. The partnership is very positive for both the school and the Council, as the students offer a public retail service whilst gaining skills and qualifications.
- The Open Spaces Team are also starting the first growing season at the Uttoxeter Garden Project, which will offer volunteering opportunities for people with health problems and disabilities. The Uttoxeter Garden Project is based at the leisure centre, and highlights the health benefits of gardening as an alternative to sports based activities.
- The Council is also part of the Staffordshire Dementia Action Alliance, which is an alliance for organisations across England to connect, share best practice and take action on dementia.

Objective 2: Decision making and services are influenced by the needs of residents and communities

Our aim is for all communities to engage in public and civic life, and for information from all communities to influence decision making, planning and the delivery of services. We aim for information from and about communities to include information across all protected characteristics, communities of interest and communities of place.

In the last twelve months the Neighbourhood Working team have delivered a number of consultation events, with information from residents feeding into decision making about open spaces and parks. Two Community Fun Days were held in Shobnall Ward in August 2016 with the County Council and the Third Sector to establish people's views on services and how they feel about their area. A neighbourhood event was also held in January 2017 to launch the Neighbourhood Fund, which was attended by 86 people from community groups, parish councils and elected Members. The Neighbourhood Working team also met with residents over the establishment of a parkour facility in Wheatley Lane Recreation Ground, Winshill and consulted with local residents about the improvements to the recreation area at Oak Road open space (Barton).

The Neighbourhood Working team held a consultation event with the Afghan community about their current activities and aspirations for the future, and consulted with youth groups and a school about the provision of teen equipment at Bramshall Road Park, as well as engaging with the Friends of Bramshall Road Park and other partners regarding improvements to the park to prepare a funding bid.

In Uttoxeter the team carried out consultation over the future of the Greenacres Drive open space and encouraged community involvement with residents, and supported the Heath Big Local Partnership with various consultation exercises around projects and review of work.

In addition to the work undertaken by the Neighbourhood Working team regarding parks and play areas, the Open Spaces team has also installed a new ramp to a park in Upper Mills, Anglesey to enable access to the park for people who have mobility issues. The need for this ramp was identified by local residents, supported by a local Councillor.

Regular consultation is also undertaken by the Sports Development team, who meet three to four times a year with the Able Too Forum to co-ordinate activities for disabled people along with parents and partners.

In the past year the Planning Policy team have undertaken consultation with members of the public regarding the Housing Choice Supplementary Planning Document, which sought views on how to meet housing needs. The Housing Choice Supplementary Planning Document is now adopted and used in determining planning applications.

In addition, the Planning Policy team have been supporting Neighbourhood Planning in the borough, which is a relatively new legislative planning tool for communities, introduced by the Localism Act. Seventeen communities, led by Parish Councils, are

involved in Neighbourhood Planning in East Staffordshire, giving local people the power to influence planning decisions in their neighbourhoods. Neighbourhood Plans have to go through two formal consultation stages, where the comments and opinions of residents are taken on board to help shape the plan. No two Neighbourhood Plans are the same, as each community has a different set of objectives and therefore policies.

Neighbourhood Plans are finally put to a public referendum, where voters are asked whether they would like the Borough Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan to help make planning decisions in their area. So far in East Staffordshire thirteen plans have got to and passed Referendum stage. The average yes vote so far has been 90% with an average turnout of 27%.

Objective 3: Discrimination, harassment and hate crime is not tolerated

To support the general equality duty aims to “eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.”

Our aim is for discrimination, harassment and hate crime related to disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, age, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership or sexual orientation to not be tolerated, both in the community and in the workforce. Our aim is for everyone to have the confidence to report incidents of harassment, discrimination, victimisation and hate crime, and to be confident that it will be dealt with robustly. We aim for good relations to be promoted between and within communities.

Information on discrimination, hate crime, harassment and the standards of behaviour expected from employees of the Council is communicated to new starters during the induction programme, and the Council’s Dignity at Work, Equality in Employment Policy Statement and Single Equality Scheme provide guidance for staff members on these topics. Guidance on hate crime and incident reporting for staff has been recently updated and communicated to staff members. Incidents of discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation in our workforce are recorded and appropriate action taken in line with HR policies.

Residents are informed of hate crime and discrimination reporting channels via our website, and any incidents of hate crime or incidents reported to the Council are recorded and action taken as appropriate. Anti social behaviour motivated by hatred for the victim related to a protected characteristic is identified and dealt with appropriately, and equality information on anti social behaviour complaints is recorded, analysed and published on our website. Racist and offensive graffiti is removed within 24 hours of being reported to the Council.

Objective 4: Our workforce, and workforce policies, support equality

We aim for our workforce policies and practices to not discriminate, provide equal opportunities for employees to progress and develop and to be responsive to the needs of the workforce. We also aim for our workforce to understand and support our equality commitments. Our Equality in Employment Policy Statement states that “equality applies to all our employment policies and practices and at all stages of employment including recruitment and selection, learning and development, career development, working relationships, disciplinary procedures, redundancy and retirement.” East Staffordshire Borough Council recognises that our employees are our most valuable asset and is committed to:

- ensuring that all employees are treated with dignity and respect and that no form of intimidation, bullying or harassment is tolerated;
- making training, development and progression opportunities available to all staff;
- ensuring that all of our employment policies and practices reflect our commitments to equality and fairness;
- fostering good relations between people of different groups within the workforce and external parties such as job applicants.

Training

The Council continues to develop our staff members' understanding of equality through e-learning and face to face training. A module on equality is part of the e-induction programme, which is required to be completed by all new employees. In addition, training for staff has been held on the following topics:

2016/17

Autism and Sport
FA Coaching Disabled Footballers
Dance with older people
Taking the stress out of reasonable adjustments
Ante/Post natal fitness training
Managing stress in the workplace
Dementia Awareness training

2015/16

Equality awareness training
Delivering an excellent service for disabled customers (English Federation of Disability Sport)
Managing stress in the workplace

15 Councillors attended the equality briefing held as part of the Councillor Induction Programme in 2015, and information on equalities forms part of the Councillor A to Z handbook, provided to all Councillors on election. 26 Councillors attended a briefing session in February 2017 on the topic of safeguarding, child sexual exploitation, modern day slavery, Prevent and honour based abuse.

One of the Council's Core Competencies, updated in 2016, includes an understanding of equality as part of the 'safety and risk' competency. Each member of staff is required to consider how well they meet the requirements of the competency during their annual appraisal. 99% of employees received an appraisal in 2016, where training needs are identified.

Equality and Health Working Group

Membership of the Equality and Health Working Group was refreshed in 2016 and the group meets bi-monthly to discuss national and local equality developments and initiatives, and contribute to the Council's equality and health activities. Group members are organisational equality champions and assisted in the creation of this progress report.

Workforce Information

Annual workforce profiles are created and published on our website, the 2016 Workforce Profile has been published and includes information on:

- The composition of the workforce by sex, age, ethnicity and disability and the return to work rate following maternity leave. Information on gender is also broken down by part time / full time staff and pay scale.
- Applicants, people shortlisted and appointed by sex, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation (information not published due to small numbers of people providing data) and religion or belief.
- Staff leavers by gender, age, ethnicity and disability.

Employees can update their equality information via the self service HR system. Over time we hope that sufficient information is provided from existing staff related to sexual orientation and religion or belief that this information can also be published. Workforce equality information informs policy decisions via EHIAs.

Disability Confident Employer

In 2016 the Council migrated from the 'two tick' disability accreditation to the Disability Confident Employer accreditation. During the recruitment process, all applicants who state that they have a disability are guaranteed an interview if they meet the essential criteria on the person specification for the role. The Council supports adjustments and flexible working for members of staff with disabilities.

We aim to encourage job applications from all communities and the retention of staff from all communities and groups. The Flexible Working and Flexible Working Hours Policies have been refreshed this year, which form part of our family friendly policies. As with all policies, HR policies are required to have an equality and health impact assessment when they are created or reviewed.

East Staffordshire – The Population Context

Around 116,000 people live in East Staffordshire across 21 wards of varying size. In the 10 years between the 2001 Census and the 2011 Census the population of East Staffordshire has increased by 9.5%. By 2025 a small population increase of 6% is projected, with much larger growth in people aged 65 and over (23%) and people aged 85 and over (42%) in the population.

The median age of East Staffordshire residents is 40 years old, which is slightly above the national and regional age of 39 but below the county average of 42 years.

Children represent 19.2% of the Borough's residents which is above the national figure of 18.9% and considerably above the Staffordshire figure of 17.7%. 16.9% of the borough's population are aged 65 and above, which is above the national rate (16.4%) but below the Staffordshire figure of 18.4%. 4.4% of borough residents are aged 80 or over.

13.8% of the borough's residents are from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds. This is more than double the Staffordshire average but below regional and national figures of around a fifth. The largest BME group within East Staffordshire is Asian / Asian British: Pakistani, accounting for 4.9% of the population. The second largest BME group within the borough is "White: Other", accounting for 3.7% of the borough's residents. This group includes those from the EU accession states, such as Poland.

The most deprived areas in the borough fall within Burton upon Trent, with the five most deprived areas falling within Eton Park, Stapenhill and Burton wards. The most deprived area in the borough is in Eton Park ward, the least deprived area is in Yoxall ward.

17.7% of the borough's residents say their day to day activities are limited, which represents over 20,100 people. 7.9% of residents state that their activities are limited a lot, which is below the national, regional and county figures.

More statistical data on East Staffordshire and its wards can be found via the following links:

- East Staffordshire Borough Council Website: <http://www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/statistics>
- Office for National Statistics: www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/
- Staffordshire Observatory: <http://www.staffordshireobservatory.org.uk>

Please note the source of all 2011 Census data is the Office for National Statistics Crown Copyright 2012. (Information from the Health and Wellbeing Profile 2015 for East Staffordshire, Staffordshire Observatory)