

**BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**  
**EQUALITY ACT 2010**  
**SPECIFIC DUTIES INFORMATION TO BE PUBLISHED 2014**

**1. SECTION 1 – WHY WE PUBLISH EQUALITY INFORMATION**

Birmingham City Council like other public authorities has for the last two years published equalities information, in demonstrating compliance with the Equality Act 2010 to give due regard to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it
- Fostering good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

In support of the general duty and to respond to the two requirements of the specific duties the council must:

- Publish equality information
- Set and publish equality objectives

**Publish equalities information** – we publish equality information from each of our service directorates to demonstrate our understanding of how different people might be affected by our activities. This helps us to ensure that services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people's needs.



Against this backdrop, the Council faces severe financial pressures in the years immediately ahead. By March 2014, the Council will have made savings to meet a combination of cuts in government funding and service pressures. Over the next four years, even bigger cuts will be needed. The Council's workforce has already been reduced by a third.

As a result of the restructure of the senior management team, the number of city council directorates has been reduced from five to three - People Directorate, Economy Directorate and Place Directorate.

### **Standing Up For Birmingham Campaign**

Whilst in the past the city council has taken a traditional approach to addressing inequalities through compliance with the equalities legislation, the council now believes that community engagement should be part of the solution through civic renewal and community participation.

Therefore, the council launched the standing up for Birmingham campaign in

4. Connect people and places
5. Create a city that values children and young people
6. Empower people to shape their neighbourhood
7. Address safety, isolation and loneliness

Through this process, it means that equality underpins the City Council's guiding principles of fairness, prosperity and democracy.

### **3. SECTION 3 - KEY THEMES AND THE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS**

Outlined below are some key projects which reflect how the council is working to address inequality in the city.

#### **3.1 A FAIR CITY**

"To protect the most vulnerable in our city, open up opportunities to the most excluded and narrow the gap in life chances between our citizens"

##### **3.1.1 Social Cohesion and Equality**

Improving social cohesion by reducing inequality, b

achievements across the city with support services and pathways through

The Council places a high priority on protecting the most vulnerable people in the City and aims to open up opportunities to the most excluded. Two areas where this is reflected are:

**Addressing special educational needs:** One of the initiatives currently being developed which targets children and young people with special education needs is the Strategy for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) - incorporating all aspects of a child's needs in one coherent plan, taking them through childhood to adulthood and aiming for the best future for every child. The Strategy is closely aligned to the Council's priority of tackling inequality, and follows an independent review of the existing arrangements. The Green paper for the SEND was agreed at Cabinet on 20 May 2013 and the draft strategy is due to go to Cabinet in June 2014.

**Support and assistance for independent living through assistive technology:** As part of the City Council's approach to enabling vulnerable and/or disabled people to live independent lives the Birmingham Telecare service provides a wide range of equipment and response mechanisms to individuals, their families and their carers to remain within their homes and participate in community life. Telecare aims to support 27,000 people by 2015.

The council also provides a 24-hour emergency service called Careline to help people keep their independence. The service is available to older people and anyone who feels vulnerable, has a disability or a medical need, and has who has a working telephone line in their home. In an emergency e.g. a fall or running out of urgent medication a person can press their pendant and it will immediately connect people with the Careline Contact Centre who in turn will contact the emergency services or other named responders to provide the appropriate assistance.

## **Gender Reassignment**

**LGBT – the 'Out and About'** research conducted in 2011 – identified that there were, Trans people living in all districts of Birmingham and that most Trans people surveyed identified as female -72% with 22.2% identifying as male.

The Council is committed to the health and wellbeing of all its employees and recognises the need to handle the sensitive issue of Gender Re-assignment and support people through the process professionally, seamlessly and without prejudice. As such, a range of guidance has been developed to assist both managers' and staff.

## **Sexual Orientation equality**

**LGBT – the 'Out and About'** research conducted in 2011 - estimated there are between 60-100,000 Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual or Trans (LGBT) people







## **Sex equality**

Birmingham's population numbers 1,073,045 of which 527, 806 are male and 545, 239 are female

The Council recognises the contribution that the diversity of our population has made to our economic growth and prosperity. We believe that it is important, both morally and economically, to accelerate the pace of change in the area of gender equality - advancing equality for women in this City.

**Women's Hub** - As part of the economic zones initiative the first phase of a Women's Enterprise Centre, to develop a new women's enterprise hub was launched. The hub will encourage business start ups and enterprises to help women into work, through the provision of a dedicated facility and tailored support to meet the needs of women looking to start and grow new businesses. A second phase of the programme has been approved.

### **3.1.2 A city that supports families and values children and young people**

Our young people are the future of our city and it is right that we make it our top priority to address the challenges they are facing. Some initiatives being developed to achieve this were outlined previously. This work will be overseen by the Children's Strategic Partnership Board, which comprises senior representatives from appropriate agencies who have a strong commitment to deliver on the key priorities of the

During the year, Birmingham's profile has grown as we have focused on how to support local economic growth. As part of our plans for 2013/14, we intend to c

### 3.3 A DEMOCRATIC CITY

To deliver on our vision for devolution and localisation and to rebuild engagement in local democracy by putting local people and communities at the heart of everything we do

Much has been achieved on the localisation and devolution agenda, and as outlined in the Leaders' Policy Statement the council values the enormous contribution of active citizenship and voluntary work in our neighbourhoods and the knowledge and judgement of people when it comes to dealing with local issues. We are currently developing a new **Neighbourhood Framework** shaped by engagement with local communities and organisations across the city. The aim of the framework is to identify opportunities to allow individuals and organisations to shape their neighbourhoods that meet the needs of their local areas. Equally, the strategy will seek to tackle inequality and social exclusion to make Birmingham a socially inclusive city. It is proposed that the draft neighbourhood strategy will be presented to Cabinet in March 2014.

## 4. SECTION 4 – VALUING OUR PEOPLE

The Council cannot hope to deliver the aims outlined in the Leader's Policy Statement, and fulfil its responsibilities in responding to the equalities legislation without the support and whole hearted commitment of our staff.

The Leader has affirmed the Council's commitment to the Fresh Start programme to provide more support to employees and to encourage commitment and performance. This is reflected through:

- (a) **Managers and Staff** – in addition to the information which we collect and publish in respect of our services and functions, as a Council we also collect and publish workforce information to effectively meet the general equality duty. This includes information in respect of workforce equality profiling; staff engagement etc.
- (b) **Policies, procedures and practices** – the council have developed a number of ways to support our employees and managers – giving everyone the tools to maximise their potential and provide the best services possible. This information is available through the intranet system 'People Solutions'. This resources is accessible to all managers and staff, and provides information on key employment policies and procedures.
- (c) **Employee Network Groups** – the council celebrates its employee diversity through three recognised Corporate Employee Network Groups (Corporate Black Workers Support Group (CBWSG); Disability Advisory Network (DAN) and the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Tran people (LGBT). The Employee Network Groups provide a framework to work with the City Council managers and their staff to identify and address inequality, support policy development and capacity building, to benefit employees and foster positive and productive working relationships

## 5. **SECTION 5 – CONCLUDING REMARKS**

As captured in the introduction the council's high level priorities are reflected in the Leader's Policy Statement, with delivery being achieved through the individual Directorate Business Plans and Strategies. This document does not therefore provide a full breakdown of all information gathered by the council for all its priority areas. It does however; provide some context of which reflects the Councils stated commitment of equalities. It also profiles some key initiatives, which meet the needs of those people who fall within one or more of the protected characteristics recognised by the Equality Act.

In addition, each service directorate of the Council publishes a range of information, which it collects in respect of equalities. This is demonstrated in their annually published equality information, which can be accessed alongside further information on the work of each service directorate by clicking on the relevant link below.

In order to obtain details of other initiatives that the council has prioritised we have provided links to where this information can be found and the source for the content of this report. This can be accessed by clicking on the relevant links below:

**Corporate Strategies**

[Leaders Policy Statement](#)