

North Yorkshire County Council
Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee
14 September 2020

Equality & Diversity Report
(including progress on objectives 2016 – 2020)

1.0 Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with an overview of progress with achieving the Council's Equality and Diversity objectives and an update on the work of the Management Board Task Group.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The [Equality Act 2010](#) imposes a duty on the County Council to pay due regard to equality in the exercise of its functions, in particular to:
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 2.2 The Council has chosen to use equality impact assessments as a tool to evidence due regard. All new services and any changes to existing services are equality impact assessed by staff using standard templates.
- 2.3 The protected characteristics under the Equality Act are age, disability, race, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity. The Council has also chosen to pay due regard to additional characteristics – living in a rural area, living on a low income and being a carer.

3.0 Equality objectives

- 3.1 The public sector equality duty also requires us to prepare and publish one or more equality objectives at least every four years. In September 2016 equality objectives for North Yorkshire County Council were agreed. These objectives are listed in Appendix 1, together with a summary of current progress.
- 3.2 These objectives are due to be refreshed in 2020 and work had begun on this before the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic. Available staff time to develop the objectives has been extremely limited in the intervening time and, in addition, the impact of the pandemic has meant that a re-evaluation of priorities is needed. Even if the work to refresh the objectives had been completed before the pandemic they would still now need further review in light of inequalities exposed and exacerbated by the effects of the outbreak, for example school closures, health disparities, unemployment and subsequent economic hardship.
- 3.3 Work is therefore beginning to refocus the council's equality priorities to reflect this. The refreshed objectives will be embedded in the performance framework and monitored and reported through quarterly performance reporting to Management Board and Executive.

4.0 Leadership and vision

- 4.1 The Management Board task group set up to foster a more positive, inclusive approach to equality and diversity has also been held back by capacity issues caused by the pandemic and subsequently, local government reorganisation. The group comprises Richard Webb (Corporate Director of Health and Adult Services), Justine Brooksbank (Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support)), Vanessa Glover (Head of Communications), and Neil Irving (Assistant Director – Policy, Partnerships and Communities). Deborah Hugill (Senior Strategy and Performance Officer) is facilitating the group.
- 4.2 However, as mentioned above, the pandemic has also exposed or created particular inequalities. In addition, specific inequalities have also been condemned by the Black Lives Matter campaign. This has been recognised by Management Board and they held a discussion in June to consider how the County Council should respond.
- 4.3 It was noted that around a third of our workforce have not provided information on their ethnicity and consideration is being given to how we change the way we capture and store this to try to increase participation and trust.
- 4.4 The lack of staff networks based on protected characteristics was also noted. This has meant that the voices of people from different backgrounds are not heard as well as they should be and management do not have routes to consult with groups of staff. Evidence from elsewhere suggests that these networks need to be proactively supported and resourced in order to be effective. A newly appointed graduate post in Human Resources with a specific focus on equality and diversity will provide some capacity to do this.
- 4.5 Following the discussion, Management Board is supporting the establishment of a NYCC Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Network to be chaired by the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic). The aim is to help management to hear and better understand the lived experience of BAME staff and for management to use this better understanding to combat racism and unconscious bias against people from different backgrounds. Volunteers to be part of the group are currently being recruited.
- 4.6 It was also agreed that the Corporate Equalities Group be asked to develop a wider equality reference group open to everyone employed by NYCC to encourage broader conversations on equality issues. Work is underway to set this up.
- 4.7 Over the last few months high profile members of staff have also used their intranet blogs to highlight and celebrate diversity. Blogs have included photographs and videos, bringing to life the realities of, for example, Ramadan and Eid for Muslim staff members. This has helped others understand how these are marked and what they mean to people, and how they have been affected by lockdown. The response to these, and other, blogs from staff has been very positive and many have commented about how much they have helped them understand and appreciate better the experiences of others. This approach will be continued, with blogs used to foster inclusion and celebrate diversity using, where possible, the experiences of staff or our local communities in order to make these issues real for people.
- 4.8 It was also agreed that the task group will bring quarterly reports on progress to Management Board.

5.0 Further information

- NYCC [Equality and Diversity Policy Statement](#)
- [Equal opportunities information](#) including gender pay gap information and other information in relation to our workforce diversity.

- Equality and diversity section on the NYCC website <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity>
- Equality section on the intranet <http://nyccintranet/content/equalities>
- Information about paying due regard and templates <http://nyccintranet/content/paying-due-regard-equality-using-equality-impact-assessments>
- Online learning on Learning Zone – mandatory equality and diversity course for all staff, discretionary course on equality impact assessment.
- Directorate equality reps - <http://nyccintranet/content/equalities-contacts>
- Demographic Information - www.datanorthyorkshire.org www.northyorks.gov.uk/equality-opportunities-information
<http://nyccintranet/content/our-diverse-communities>

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 Equality and diversity is an important priority for the Council. Paying due regard to equality is not just a legal obligation but good customer service. We will continue to foster a positive and inclusive approach to our staff and customers, and ensure we are better informed about impacts on specific groups and geographic areas. Equality objectives will be better integrated into the Council's performance management framework and will reflect the needs of our communities post-Covid.
- 6.2 The role of Members is to challenge services to progress and embed the objectives, and to take a leadership role in communities. Progress will continue to be reported to the committee on an annual basis, or as required.

7.0 Recommendations

Members are recommended to note the report and provide comments and suggestions for additional improvements.

Deborah Hugill
Senior Strategy and Performance Officer
28 August 2020

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Progress towards equality objectives as of August 2020

Summary of progress towards equality objectives as of August 2020

No	Objective	Progress
1	Ensure that people can maintain access to essential services	<p>This objective seeks to ensure that essential services are accessible to all who need them, regardless of protected characteristic. There are a number of strands to this. For various reasons including reduced finances, many public and private sector services are increasingly being centralised, and in a large rural county it is inevitable that this will mean increased travel for many people, so good public transport links are vital. Alternative means of access to certain services also need to be considered and good quality broadband and mobile phone coverage are particularly important here, as assistive health technology e.g. telecare. Provision of community based services can also ensure that services are local and tailored to the needs of communities. Equality impact assessments are carried out on all changes to NYCC service provision and are integrated into 2020 project processes.</p> <p>Indices of Deprivation statistics for England are published by the Ministry for Housing, Communities & Local Government and include a measure of Geographical Barriers to services which is calculated using road distances to a GP surgery, supermarket or convenience store, primary school and post office. The latest figures (2015) show that more than 40% of North Yorkshire Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) fall within the lowest national quintile in terms of the Geographical Barriers sub-domain (155 LSOAs in total). The LSOA which covers the Dales ward in Ryedale is the most deprived in England for Geographical Barriers to Services.</p> <p>As part of work to improve access to modern communication in the county a post was created in 2017 to progress improvements to the mobile phone network. Following the results of a survey in 2018 to review mobile phone coverage, we identified 9 areas where NYCC could potentially use the £1m YNYER Local Enterprise Partnership funding to improve coverage. After a public consultation we tendered for 6 of these sites to be built. Arqiva, the UK's largest independent infrastructure provider, were awarded the contract in Jan 2019 and are currently trying to attract a mobile operator to operate from the potential sites. Following the tender it became clear that we would only be able to fund three or four new masts, due to the cost of the provision. The lack of interest from the mobile operators has led the current programme to slip, however we are hopeful that we will shortly get a mobile operator to agree heads of terms and the new mobile masts will be built. We expect the programme to be complete by March 2021.</p> <p>Provision of good quality broadband is also a priority and work is progressing through Superfast North Yorkshire, the partnership between North Yorkshire County Council and BT. The contract for Phase 3 was</p>

		<p>awarded in early 2018. During phase 3 we expect to extend coverage to a further 14250 homes and businesses, which would take coverage to about 95% of homes and premises. Detailed maps showing the whole county are available on the Superfast NY website, with advice to those with or without coverage about how to access improved broadband performance.</p> <p>Access to more services is being provided online and our online community directory signposting to a wide range of providers of support and community services has been launched. Customer led design input into the new website is making self-service easier.</p> <p>Our customer strategy has been developed and is being applied to service design. Use of digital technology may, of course, pose problems for some people and objective 2 aims to ensure that our 'digital by default' approach does not discriminate against any groups of customers. More details are provided in the next section.</p> <p>New methods of service delivery, as well communications, are also being rolled out and assistive health technology is one example. Telecare and telehealth provide access to services remotely and can reduce avoidable hospital admissions and enable people to be discharged from hospital earlier. They also allow people to be more independent, remain in their own home longer and play an active role in managing their own conditions.</p> <p>The purpose of the Stronger Communities Programme is to support communities to play a greater role in the delivery of services in the county, and as such the work of the team and their partners, both inside and outside the council, is vital.</p> <p>Of course, effective transport solutions to access services are not only vitally important to the communities of North Yorkshire, but are also integral to the delivery of mitigation activity across the other Stronger Communities priorities, in particular health and social care. In response to this identified need, all projects developed and supported through the Stronger Communities Programme must consider transport solutions as part of their project development.</p> <p>Stronger Communities have also produced an investment prospectus. As part of this they have developed a set of outcomes to which funded projects will have to demonstrate they are making a positive contribution. The first of these outcomes is 'reduced inequalities' which specifically lists 'improving access to services or removal of barriers'.</p> <p>The community library programme has been successful in maintaining a comprehensive network. Twenty-two libraries transferred to community ownership on 1 April 2017, and business levels countywide have been</p>
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		<p>maintained on previous years, and in some cases improved thanks to the more than 2,000 volunteers across the county.</p> <p>Increased and more sustainable community transport remains a priority for Stronger Communities in its own right and several schemes are being supported. Work has been carried out to develop a North Yorkshire community transport brand, golocal – connecting people and places. The branding has been co-designed with community transport providers and will support local providers' individual branding and marketing activity to create a recognisable North Yorkshire family of providers with the aim of increasing the public's awareness, perceptions and usage of community transport.</p> <p>A website has been developed to support this work http://www.golocal-northyorks.community/ and a promotional video is also available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NbM26_FI6IE</p> <p>The programme has also funded an accessible car for Esk Moors Caring to improve access for their clients to medical appointments and other essential services.</p> <p>Transport is a hugely important issue for the young people of the county, as well as those who are older, and North Yorkshire Youth Voice is working on a campaign to improve access to transport for young people.</p> <p>The road network in North Yorkshire is the third largest in England and both roads and pavements are maintained to a high standard which aids pedestrians and those reliant on good roads to attend appointments, day centres and social events so as to combat isolation and loneliness.</p> <p>A review of availability of banking and post office services in communities across North Yorkshire was carried out by the Transport and Communications Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2018. North Yorkshire Disability Forum provided a submission to the Executive when the access to banking/POs report was considered, on the effects of reduction of access to high street facilities on disabled people.</p> <p>Earlier in 2018, government consulted on their revised interpretation of European Regulations that govern s19 and s22 permit operations for community transport. This was seen as putting community transport providers at financial risk and the proposal could undermine the viability of many community transport providers in rural areas. At the time of writing, the DfT is still formally considering the consultation responses.</p> <p>The experience of moving our engagement forums to video platforms where possible has highlighted both opportunities and inequalities of access to the internet for disabled people. For some disabled people, it has been beneficial and improved access as the need to travel was removed. Support was given to help forum members to use video meeting platforms, including provision of accessible guidance, coaching and opportunities to develop skills in a safe and supportive environment. More people than anticipated took well to online meetings, including self-advocates (people with a learning disability).</p>
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2	<p>Working with customers, ensure that the council's digital by default strategy is inclusive of the widest range of customers as possible, taking into account different access requirements and the needs of those who experience digital exclusion</p>	<p>Importantly, the County Council, in moving to provide services online, is ensuring that current channels of communication and service delivery are not removed. Customer led design input into the new website is making self-service easier.</p> <p>When services are designed we get involvement from as wide a range of people as possible in the design and testing of the service – using all channels.</p> <p>We ensure that our approach to the design and implementation of services supports the delivery of the Accessible Information Standard with which we have a legal duty to comply in relation to health and social care issues. We have agreed a number of sets of principles for the design of services online, one set of which relates to accessibility, including compatibility with industry standards, appropriate font size and contrast, consistent and Plain English content, and that users of assistive technology can easily access the site. Regular user testing is built in.</p> <p>Each service is considered individually and accessibility routes across all channels are explored. Demand and feedback on all channels is regularly monitored. For example, age or disabled bus passes can now be applied for online. An automatic renewal process to save customers time and effort is now in place for the older persons' bus pass and, in some cases, the disabled persons' bus pass, following customer feedback.</p>

		<p>Face to face engagement with customers is also part of the customer strategy and includes a four stage offer which provides different levels of support that are relevant and appropriate for different services and buildings. This is being developed to ensure the provision of Face to Face support is available throughout the County for customers with different needs; such as sign-posting them to other services or accessing a computer because they have the skills to do this but don't have their own equipment.</p> <p>Consultation and engagement with the public, including specific groups representing disabled and older people, was carried out recently on the council's customer strategy, and the feedback from this has informed the development of the strategy. 86% of respondents agreed with the approach outlined in the strategy. Reasons for people not agreeing with the approach included concerns about those who cannot, or do not wish to, access services digitally, and as mentioned previously no alternative channels of communication will be removed. However, carers, for example, were on the whole supportive of online services as they can then access them at times to fit around their caring role. Some disability groups, such as those with hearing impairments, can find online services such as web-chat particularly useful. Exploratory work is being carried out to consider the feasibility of providing video relay services for those customers who use British Sign Language.</p> <p>The Stronger Communities Programme are training volunteers to be assisted digital buddies. The aim of these volunteers will be to help more people access online services, if the barriers to them doing so are around confidence and skills. This is being carried out in conjunction with the library service and adult learning. Funding streams are also being sought to procure devices, such as tablets.</p>
3	<p>Improve the wellbeing and inclusion of lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and trans children and young people</p>	<p>The LGBT strategy partnership group continue to meet and the following progress is being made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYCC came first in the Stonewall Education Equality Index 2019. The index measures practice as well as policy and looks at three key areas: the role of the LA, working with schools and working with the community to celebrate difference, tackle homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic bullying and supporting LGBT children and young people. The Education Equality Index no longer runs in the same format • The range of updated guidance for schools to access to support them challenge homophobic, transphobic and bi-phobic (HBT) bullying, celebrate difference and support LGBT children and young people are continually updated. The guidance documents can be accessed at http://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/equalities-and-diversity NYCC are working in partnership with a number of Local Authorities to ensure a consistent message about supporting trans and non-binary children which will be reflected in updated guidance. • All schools can continue to access training to support them being LGBT inclusive and ensure they have LGBT inclusive relationships and sex education (RSE) as RSE is becoming statutory for all

		<p>schools in September 2020. A paper was presented to the This training has continued for all schools to access. A paper was presented to the NYCC Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee about the new statutory RSE curriculum and the members of the meeting were very supportive of the council's approach to an inclusion curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYCC Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) guidance for primary and secondary schools has clear reference to work on different families, relationships, gender and LGBT issues including three films that have been made by LGBT young people. This has continued • There continues to be a named LGBT lead councillor. This has continued • The LGBT champions continue in the Early Help service, Healthy Child Team, Compass BUZZ, North Yorkshire Youth and now CAMHS. They all receive regular Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities. The LGBT champions continue but due to covid-19 CPD opportunities have not happened this year. An LGBT+ champion from the healthy child team in the Scarborough received a 'Making a difference award' for working over and above her role to support LGBT young people. • The LA are working in partnership with Stonewall during 2019 -2020 to pilot a train the trainer LGBT and Mental Health training for professionals who work with young people in North Yorkshire. This training was rolled out and attended by 25 professionals from across North Yorkshire. The majority have then provided training to their team or other professionals. The members of staff who attended from North Yorkshire Youth have been offering the training through an online forum which there are going to be further discussions about how we can use the online training to reach more professionals. The LGBT strategy group were also successful in obtaining further funding from Suicide Prevention Programme for Hambleton, Richmondshire and Whitby to provide the LGBT and mental health training for 20 more participants but this has been postponed due to covid-19 • Barnardo's have received continued funding to work in North Yorkshire which has increased the capacity to provide training to a number of professionals and work one to one with LGBT children and young people. Barnardos have been successful in obtaining further funding to continue with their work in North Yorkshire which consists of training, working with individual schools and working 1:1 with LGBT children and young people. They have a growing number of schools in North Yorkshire who are becoming Beacon Schools for Barnardo's Positive Identities service e.g Coppice Valley Primary school https://www.coppicevalley.com/about-us/barnardos-equality-ambassadors-beams • Harrogate now runs a yearly Pride and the LGBT flag is flown over County Hall to support Prides. NYCC library ran an LGBT focused event during the summer and encouraged people to submit poems and their words. This was promoted widely on Facebook and the NYCC intranet, along with information about how other services were supporting pride month http://nyccintranet/news/north-yorkshire-celebrates-pride • The LGBT youth groups continue to run across the County and two areas have set up monthly support groups for parents and families of LGBT young people. The LGBT youth groups have continued to
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		<p>provide support and time for members to get together online through covid-19 and two of the groups now have a session that younger LGBT young people can attend, this has come in response from a request from some young people and their parents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some members of the NYCC Youth Executive Board are young people from the LGBT community and they have fed into a number of consultations about how things could be better for them in North Yorkshire. • The Growing up in North Yorkshire survey 2020 will run in October 2020 and will once again ask secondary aged pupils about their sexuality and gender to enable us to have a specific LGB and gender report so we can continue to monitor this group of young people and their experiences and perspectives in relation to all aspects contained within the survey.
<p>4</p>	<p>Improve rates of progress for vulnerable groups of children and young people (as reflected in our children and young people's plan - Young and Yorkshire)</p>	<p>The joint local area Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) inspection by OFSTED of North Yorkshire in July 2016 identified that:</p> <p><i>“The needs of children and young people are supported well through effective outreach work from special schools and enhanced mainstream schools “</i> <i>“Transition arrangements between settings are effective, ensuring that children and young people have a settled start in new places of learning. “</i></p> <p>But the inspection also identified that <i>“The differences in outcomes in the early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2 between children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and their peers are wider than the national averages.”</i></p> <p>The Coastal Opportunity Area Plan should help a number of potentially disadvantaged children to reach their full potential but it will take a number of years before we see the long term impact of such projects.</p> <p>Free School Meals</p> <p>There remains a significant gap between disadvantaged (eligible for free school meals in any of the last six years, looked after in care or adopted) pupils and other pupils at every Key Stage and this has generally widened as the rate of improvement for other pupils has been greater.</p> <p>Coastal Opportunity Area Plan – 2019 Attainment Information</p> <p>Early Years Foundation Stage – Disadvantaged pupils in Opportunity Area. Achievement of a good level of development (GLD) by disadvantaged pupils in the Opportunity Area schools improved by 1.4% in 2019. Although the achievement of disadvantaged pupils in the area is 6% lower than the national benchmark for disadvantaged pupils over the last two years the percentage gaining GLD has increased by 1.7%, whereas nationally the achievement rate has reduced by 0.2%.and the North Yorkshire achievement rate reduced by 2.2%.</p>

Phonics – Disadvantaged pupils in Opportunity Area.

The proportion of disadvantaged pupils in opportunity Area schools working at the expected standard in Phonics dropped by 0.5% to 66.2% between 2017 and 2019. This is comparable to North Yorkshire disadvantaged overall cohort achievement rate of 66.3%

KS2 – Disadvantaged pupils in Opportunity Area.

Between 2017 and 2019, there was an improvement of 9.4% to 42.5% achieving the expected level or above in reading, writing and maths. This shows a higher rate of improvement compared to North Yorkshire disadvantaged cohort (6.9%) and the nationally (3.9%). The disadvantage gap in Opportunity Area schools is narrower than the county average, however, both remain wider than national.

Key Stage 4 – Disadvantaged pupils in Opportunity Area.

Between 2017 and 2019 there was a decline in the attainment 8 score for Opportunity Area pupils (by 1.6% to 28.1). North Yorkshires disadvantaged attainment 8 score also declined during the same period (by 0.8% to 34.7)

Progress 8 score for disadvantaged pupils in Opportunity Area pupils also declined (by 0.19 to -0.99). North Yorkshires disadvantaged progress 8 score declined during the same period (by 0.03 to -0.51).

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND): A Raising Achievement of SEND working group has been established, and data and outcomes analysed. There is a focus on early identification, with guidance and moderation opportunities for SEN Co-ordinators. Secondary pupils being removed from SEN support are particularly vulnerable to underachievement and we are investigating why and when children are being removed. Also vulnerable to underachievement are pupils with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) – we are working with targeted schools re. SEND practice plus SLCN screening, assessment and intervention, with the aim of producing a SEND toolkit.

Social, Emotional, Mental Health (SEMH): Back on Track with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (BoT SEMH) is an extension of the No Wrong Door offer and has been operational since September 2017. A multi-disciplinary team who work with schools, young people, families and other professionals to promote best practice in supporting young people with social, emotional and mental health needs. They ensure young people's needs are being met so that they can thrive in education, at home and in the community reducing high risk behaviour and empowering children and young people to build and restore relationships.

		<p>Early years (EY) Closing the Gap (CTG) delivery plan is in place to run until 2018. We are looking to renew next year though the four key priorities are still valid. Working with all partners to share pertinent data as above, identify and target areas and schools/settings/CMs within them. Targeting resources and evaluating impact of spending. Further develop links and partnerships in the sector through EY Leads, Special Leaders of Education and outstanding providers/schools to support partnership improvement work. Two year old assessment data is being collated to identify and target themes for earlier intervention. Gender gaps are identifiable at the age of two years for funded children. We will continue liaison with virtual school team, social care, Inclusive Education Service, Prevention Service and adult learning to enable a holistic model of CTG from parents to children.</p> <p>Service Pupils Catterick project 2016/17: Implementation of emotional first aid and emotional health and wellbeing targeted project with school, Strategic coaching for targeted schools, on entry assessment pilot and maths intervention training. Emerging work through the Service Families Strategy Group (SFSG) into 2017/18 to focus on those with SEND, progression rates to higher education & engaging with Director of Children and Young People's Services / DfE over analysis of performance data, as well as roll-out of emotional first aid training.</p> <p>Young Carers Young carers cards now in place in primary and secondary schools to help identification and supporting their needs. Schools are signposted to young carers resources and training</p> <p>Looked After Children. Virtual school awarded Careers Mark Quality Award. Focussed work to improve quality of personal education plans from Early Years upwards. 12 month contract with Welfare Call to provide daily/weekly analysis of attendance, targeted case work. Further reduce the number of fixed term exclusions of children in the care of NYCC. Training for schools on attachment and trauma.</p>
5	<p>Improve access to employment opportunities for young people not in education, employment and training (NEET) and those with a disability</p>	<p>Despite historically low 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' (NEET) levels in the County there is still a small cohort that are difficult to identify and who may not be responsive to offers of support. Legislation to raise the participation age and a focus on tracking 16 and 17 year olds has helped the Local Authority target its resources more effectively but the issue still remains.</p> <p>Children & Families Service through their Early Help Offer contact all 16 & 17 year olds who are known to be NEET to offer them support and signposting to a range of providers who are able to most effectively engage them in education, employment and training opportunities.</p>

		<p>The joint local area SEND inspection of North Yorkshire by OFSTED in July 2016 identified that</p> <p><i>“Post-16 provision is effective. There are strong links to local colleges and the proportion of young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities who go on to further positive destinations when leaving secondary school is similar to the national average.”</i></p> <p><i>“Discussions with young people demonstrate that their destinations post-16 are well matched to their aspirations. Young people who have managed to secure post-19 provision also state that their destinations are appropriate to their aspirations.”</i></p> <p>But it also noted that <i>“not all areas have a range of post-19 opportunities for young people (with SEND) to continue their journey to adulthood.”</i></p> <p>Skills Team Plan 16-17 - Improvement & ‘Business as Usual’ Actions for NEET</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic overview of NEET figures including unknowns • Active Support contract (to Aug 2018) to reduce unknowns • Liaison with schools and colleges for timely reporting of data to improve quality of data submitted to DfE and consequently NYCC standing in league tables. • European Social Fund NEET projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alignment with other related projects. ○ Representation on district steering groups. ○ Reporting progress and outcomes to Skills team. ○ Feedback from Skills team to help shape future Local Enterprise Partnership NEET procurement. ○ Preventative work - 147 students Yr10 & Yr11. ○ Support for NEET – 252 young people up to age 19 (24 with SEND) <p>Apprenticeships have changed with the government’s new scheme including the apprenticeship levy and public sector targets, which present both challenges and opportunities for the council. Previous reports to the committee have already highlighted these, but they include availability of apprentices and requirement within the service both of which are out of step with the targets. However, services are using the levy as an opportunity to shape future workforce needs where possible.</p>
6	Take opportunities, where it is proportionate to do so, to improve accessibility of public transport	<p>Many people rely on public transport in North Yorkshire, including people who have a disability which prevents them from driving and older people who no longer can or choose not to drive. So accessibility standards on public transport are very important.</p> <p>Since 2000 all new buses must be accessible. For buses manufactured before 2000 single deckers in service have had to be fully accessible since 1 January 2016 and double-deckers in service have had to be fully</p>

accessible since 1 January 2017. Single and Double deck coaches manufactured before 2005 have until 1 January 2020 to be accessible. All North Yorkshire County Council operated buses are fully wheelchair accessible.

Feedback from users of commercial bus companies has tended to focus around the problems of driver attitude, conflict between parents with a pram and wheelchair users, and buses only having one wheelchair space. A recent Supreme Court ruling (Jan 2017) held that bus drivers must make efforts to ensure that other passengers make room for wheelchair users. Following that ruling, the Department for Transport established a stakeholder 'Task and Finish Group on the Use of Wheelchair Spaces on Buses' (the group). The group made 4 specific recommendations:

1. That the Public Service Vehicles (Conduct of Drivers, Inspectors, Conductors and Passengers) Regulations 1990 (the Conduct Regulations) are amended to enable drivers to remove passengers from the bus who unreasonably refuse to move when requested from the wheelchair space
2. The associated guidance is amended to better reflect the behaviours expected from drivers and passengers with respect to use of the wheelchair space
3. Further work is conducted to consider how best to raise public awareness of the behaviours expected from passengers with respect to the wheelchair space, for example a public awareness campaign, or improved signage on buses
4. That conditions of carriage and disability awareness training best practice guidance are updated to reflect the fact that passengers will be required to move from the wheelchair space should it be required by a passenger in a wheelchair

North Yorkshire County Council plays an influencing role to encourage commercial bus companies to enforce this ruling, and we will also take up individual complaints and comments on a case by case basis to try to improve the experience for bus users.

Feeling safe on public transport can also be an issue which affects people's ability and willingness to use it and in North Yorkshire satisfaction with bus services ranked amongst the highest in the country with personal security on the bus being in the top 3 drivers of satisfaction for our residents. Results from the Bus Passenger Travel Survey 2015 conducted by Transport Focus recorded overall satisfaction in NY as 94%, (joint top with Nottinghamshire); satisfaction amongst vulnerable groups was particularly high, with Older People (pass holders) at 98% and people who declared they had a disability at 93%. Satisfaction for Personal Safety was also high at 91%.

	<p>Driver training is also key here, as are anti-hate crime campaigns aimed at making it clear that hate crimes will not be tolerated and how it should be reported. Through the North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership, North Yorkshire County Council contributes to campaigns and other pro-active work to ensure that hate crime is prioritised and vulnerable people are able to feel safe in their communities. Our community cohesion workers also work directly with communities to promote good relations. Multi agency communications and engagement strategies are being developed for Hate Crime Awareness Week (wk beg 12.10.20). Based on the blueprint from safeguarding week we will be promoting how to report, supporting victims via webinars, and use of social media platforms</p> <p>North Yorkshire County Council continues to work with Network Rail, rail franchisees (Northern Rail, Transpennine Express), on station studies at Thirsk, Northallerton, Malton, Seamer and Selby, with a number of aims including improving the accessibility of these stations. NYCC also uses its influence as part of Transport for the North / Rail North.</p> <p>The National Rail Access for All Scheme aims to make all stations fully access compliant over time and North Yorkshire County Council have supported successful schemes for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Northallerton Station – work (pre-COVID) was progressing for delivery in the next few years ○ Selby Station - work (pre-COVID) was progressing for delivery in the next few years ○ Thirsk Station – mid-tier funding scheme which was successful but is dependent on LEP funding ○ Horton in Ribblesdale – associated with extra trains from the quarries and is a current project ○ Hunmanby, Battersby, Starbeck – Harrington Humps - a modular and easy-to-install system by which the height of a railway platform can be increased at relatively low cost to enable easier access / egress from trains <p>Transpennine have invested in new secure cycle racks at Northallerton, Thirsk, Selby, Scarborough and Malton – at some of these locations this has included funding from NYCC.</p> <p>Northern have also invested in improved cycle facilities at many of its stations and NYCC have just started to develop a future plan with the Travel Integration & Accessibility Manager. NYCC is also working with stations to allocate more accessible parking bays and has requested to work with rail companies on station travel plans in the future.</p> <p>As detailed under objective 1 community transport is a key priority of the Stronger Communities programme and more details are provided under that section.</p> <p>Self-advocates from the North Yorkshire Learning Disability Partnership Board were members of the regional Talking Travel group facilitated by Inclusion North. This group looked at transport access issues and actively</p>
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Item 4

		<p>engaged with public transport providers to increase disability awareness. The group has now ceased but the Partnership Board is considering local opportunities to raise awareness of the importance of accessible travel.</p> <p>Local dementia groups are also engaged in projects to raise awareness of the needs of passengers with dementia and improve accessibility.</p> <p>The North Yorkshire Learning Disability Partnership Board has agreed a new work plan, which includes a specific objective to develop a new travel group.</p>
7	<p>Take opportunities, where it is proportionate to do so, to improve physical accessibility around towns</p>	<p>This objective aims to improve the everyday experiences of disabled people and others for whom physical accessibility may be an issue, for example older people and parents with prams. Accessibility was a major concern for people who took part in recent engagement for the development of the County Council’s dementia strategy, and work to make North Yorkshire more accessible will also make it more ‘dementia friendly’. The economic argument for improving accessibility is also strong as the ‘purple pound’ (potential annual spending power of disabled people, their carers and their families) has been estimated at £439.9m (2012/13). If North Yorkshire’s towns are not accessible this potential income will be lost to other geographic areas or to online purchases.</p> <p>This objective covers the public realm over which the council has some direct influence, and also buildings within town centres, most of which are outside the council’s control, such as shops. The council has no enforcement role in this regard, either through planning law or equality law, and as such an influencing approach must be taken.</p> <p>Disability forums across the county are highly motivated around this area of work given the major impact it has on everyday lives. Several local forums have carried out their own street audits and they are working with local area highway offices to understand what improvements can be made. So far this has been productive and has forged closer working relationships, enabling a better understanding of issues on both sides. The Assistant Director - Highways attended the countywide forum in September 2017, and Highways representatives have attended subsequent meetings. Members of the forum presented at a meeting of BES / Highways senior management team in January 2018. Subsequently, dialogue has continued and arrangements are being put in place for local forums to have more direct liaison with local area highways teams. This is working well.</p> <p>A number of potential improvement issues have been identified around (1) improving everyday communications with local disability forums, and about (2) how highways staff can better understand and consider the experience of disabled people including those using wheelchairs, as they go about their everyday work. As a result of developing this objective and exploring the issues, a decision was made in July 2017 to more than double the current investment in the highways accessibility fund, taking it to £75k from</p>

2018/19, and to keep accessibility funding under review. This will enable a greater number of improvements, such as dropped kerbs, to be provided. In June 2018, NYCC Highways proposed to pilot an approach to see how the North Yorkshire Disability Forum would prioritise the list of proposed schemes to be funded out of the 2019/20 highways accessibility fund budget. This project is currently on hold due to staff absences, but we intend to recommence when capacity allows.

During 2019/20, 15 schemes were completed using the funds specifically set aside for improving accessibility to towns in Hambleton, Scarborough, Craven and Selby. The 2020/21 programme includes over £95k of schemes to be delivered which includes two that were carried forward from the previous year and a large number of locations in Thorpe Willoughby.

In terms of accessibility of shops and other buildings we continue to work with the North Yorkshire Disability Forum to:

- better publicise accessibility information which is already available
- develop 'top tips' advice for local businesses
- develop toolkits to enable disability groups to carry out their own audits
- improve understanding across the council, officers and members, of disability access issues

As part of this work we have carried out research into work being done at other local authorities and have visited Chester with members of the Disability Forum to understand how they have achieved European Access City Award 2017. In March 2018, NYDF members delivered a presentation to County Councillors on the importance of access to businesses for disabled people and for the economy. This was well-received and the next step is to build on this to continue the conversation.

The Flying High Group - young people, aged 16-25, who have disabilities and additional needs – is also concerned about these issues and active in this area, as are other groups including the North Yorkshire Learning Disability Partnership Board and local dementia groups.

There are currently in the region of 30 Changing Places across North Yorkshire in a variety of buildings. Changing Places are toilets designed to provide extra facilities for people with severe or multiple disabilities. The information on the NYCC website about the location of Changing Places has been checked and uploaded to the national Changing Places website, and the NYCC page updated to link to the Changing Places website. This means that the location information will be much easier to access and keep up to date.
<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/changing-places>

		<p>A review of our own property portfolio is also being undertaken to inform future work to improve standards.</p> <p>NYCC continues to work closely with NYDF and local disability forums.</p> <p>NYDF has been working hard to raise awareness of access issues, including the hosting of a seminar for planners in October 2019 with a key speaker from the Royal Institute of British Architects, Jane Simpson, NRAC Access Consultant and Specialist Practice Advisor. This seminar was planned and delivered by NYDF members.</p> <p>Local forums also continue to be active, for example Selby District Disability Forum working closely with Selby Borough Council to ensure accessibility of major tourism events; Ripon Disability Forum introducing a local scheme to encourage businesses to have a chair for disabled customers, and liaising with the local post office to highlight poor access; Yorkshire Coast and Ryedale Disability Forum very active around accessibility of public buildings, liaising with Scarborough Borough Council.</p> <p>NYDF also contributed their views and experience to a Scrutiny Committee review to access to financial services in rural communities, in light of the withdrawal of banks and post offices.</p> <p>Whilst activity has necessarily slowed during the Covid pandemic, meetings have continued, using video meeting platforms. Members have adapted well to this and have fed back that for many, it improves accessibility as it reduces the need for travel, which can be challenging for disabled people.</p> <p>The Age Friendly Communities work led by Public Health also includes objectives around access to the built environment and the intention is to link this to the work of NYDF to enhance the profile and create synergy</p>
8	Foster good relations between our staff who share a protected characteristic and our staff who do not	<p>Key to improved relations between staff is better understanding and visibility of protected characteristics and the perception of North Yorkshire County Council as an employer who encourages diversity and supports a wide range of staff. A communications plan is being developed to give better visibility to diversity within the workforce and to dispel myths. Information from the most recent staff survey will again be analysed to understand how well staff feel they are supported in this regard.</p> <p>Blogs by the Chief Executive and two other Management Board members, have highlighted the experience of NYCC staff with different mental health problems. These personal stories, together with the supportive comments left by staff, managers and elected members, highlight the increased openness and willingness to talk about mental health problems and demonstrate top level support. Resources which are available to staff to support health and wellbeing include:</p>

- The intranet site 'Boost' <http://nyccintranet/content/boost> supports employees to take responsibility for health and wellbeing and provides advice, support and activities to help make healthy lifestyle changes
 - Part of the site includes a 'Your Support' page <http://nyccintranet/content/your-support> which takes staff to the employee assistance programme with factsheets and information and online self-assessments focusing on diet, exercise, fitness, personal coaching, medical information and emotional support
 - Confidential telephone support is also available 24/7 for all NYCC staff and family members living at the same address and covers telephone counselling, tax advice, legal advice (except for employment law), eldercare, childcare and medical information. The service is accessed via a free phone number on 0800 030 5182
 - Stress related conditions can be linked to financial difficulties and so a scheme has been introduced to support staff financial wellbeing, including help with debt management. The [Neyber scheme](#) was introduced in November 2017. There has been increasing participation in the low cost loan scheme with 90 staff now signed up. The educational hub shows 821 staff have set up a profile. A new savings scheme has launched in July 19 enabling staff to access ISAs and savings products from as little as £10 per month. The savings product is not processed through payroll but directly with the employee via direct debit.
- North Yorkshire County Council has also pledged to be a good employer for carers and workplace policies are in place to support them.

During the recent Covid pandemic support and resources have been developed for employees with a range of additional needs in mind, from those caring for children or other vulnerable loved ones, for those who already had mental health needs, and for those caring for those on the autistic spectrum for whom the changes have been particularly challenging. Since August 20 when shielding has been paused the Council is ensuring a full individual risk assessment for any employee with 1 or more vulnerabilities eg. pregnancy, Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME), prior to any consideration of a return to the workplace, including making changes to the job and/or the workplace, or redeployment to a lower risk work area.

Work has been carried out to monitor and understand gender pay gap statistics within the council. The Council's first [gender pay gap](#) figures were published in March 2018 with an action plan to improve opportunities for all to reduce the gender pay gap. The issue for NYCC is to achieve a more equal balance of female: male in traditionally lower paid predominantly female jobs, where currently trading cleaning and catering services show a 75: 25 split. Adult social care is still dominated by women with an 87: 13 split, and the current 'Care Matters' recruitment campaign has focussed on increasing the number of male applicants. Action is focussing on the 6 areas recommended by the Equality and Human Rights Commission including education, work opportunities, work flexibility, shared childcare arrangements, tackling unconscious bias and reporting progress. March 2019 saw the gender pay gap reduce from 12% to 10.9%. An equality impact assessment of the new pay structure introduced in April 2019 predicts a further small improvement in the

	<p>impact on women’s pay relative to men’s. The most recent figures reported March 2020 saw the mean gender pay gap reduce to 9.1% and the mean gender pay gap reduce to 7.1%. The proportion of women in the top quartile has increased from 65% to 70.3% over the last 3 years.</p> <p>A programme of one-year internships has now been launched aimed at those who are not ready yet for an apprenticeship scheme. This is likely to be suitable for care leavers or those with learning disabilities. Partnering with Supported Employment and Adult Learning colleagues, Resourcing Solutions secured Supported Internships for a cohort of 4 young people with a range of disabilities in 2017/18. The Supported Internship programme provides an unpaid 12 month placement for individuals alongside study with the aim of enabling them to secure employment at the end of the 12 months. We are currently reviewing our approach and planning an increased cohort for 2018/19. Resourcing Solutions, in partnership with Children’s Social Care Leaving Care Team, progress employability initiatives for young people who are care leavers. In 2018 one work experience placement for a care leaver was secured and apprenticeship opportunities were offered, but unfortunately no care leavers wanted to pursue this opportunity. In 2019 a range of Supported Internship opportunities were established and promoted to SEN young people including; Care & Support, ICT, Cleaning and Catering, Library, Passenger Transport and the Print Room. Four young people expressed initial interest in the placements and three are progressing to commence their internships in September.</p> <p>NYCC had a careers stand at the Harrogate Pride and Diversity event in June 2018 and again in July 2019. This annual parade and party promotes diversity in Harrogate - lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender, ethnicity and mental health. Staff were encouraged to support the stand to promote careers at the Council, including care and support.</p> <p>News items on the staff intranet regularly promote awareness of events and work which support this objective, for example mental health, dementia, carers, autism and deafblind awareness themes. A recent blog by the Chief Executive also highlighted work by the Local Enterprise Partnership promoting young women into engineering.</p> <p>During 2020 blogs have been written by employees on observing Ramadan during lockdown and a personal reflection on the meaning of Windrush Day. The Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) used his blog to set up a NYCC BAME network. The comments on all 3 of these important blogs, from employees and members, recognize how important it is for these topics to be discussed openly, particularly in the context of the worldwide Black Lives Matter movement.</p> <p>All staff are required to complete the mandatory equality and diversity essentials package. The package takes 1 ½ to 2 hours to complete and covers equality, diversity and inclusion, breaking down barriers, and how to</p>
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		<p>challenge unacceptable behaviour. It is one of the requirements for a successful appraisal review (and incremental pay progression) that this is completed every 3 years.</p> <p>NYCC is commissioning a bespoke equality and diversity training programme, to be rolled out initially in Health and Adult Services. The programme will be tiered, starting at Director and Assistant Director level, and the application of the learning would be at a strategic, community and individual/interpersonal level.</p> <p>Systems are being improved and developed to capture more information on employees' protected characteristics for reporting and analysis purposes, whilst being careful to ensure such sensitive information cannot be widely accessed to protect people's privacy. All staff have been asked to update their equality information in MyView and there is evidence that some have done so, although there remain large numbers who either prefer not to say or who have still not completed. Managers are being asked in Team Brief to encourage their employees to complete this information and more will be done to increase confidence in self-reporting.</p> <p>It is likely that mandatory race pay gap reporting will be announced later this year and work has commenced in preparation for this. Baseline figures can be prepared but will remain incomplete where employees do not confirm their ethnic origin.</p> <p>Health and Adult Services convened a new Diversity and Inclusion working group in 2019; although this work was paused at the height of the Covid pandemic, the group has now resumed meetings.</p> <p>Active consideration is being given by this group and by Management Board to the health inequalities highlighted by the Covid pandemic. This includes work led by HR to assess and reduce risk for colleagues, particularly Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues.</p> <p>The Directorate has worked with Healthwatch North Yorkshire on a major piece of engagement to find out more about the experiences of LGBTQ+ people when accessing health and social care, with a particular focus on mental health. The report was released in June 2020, supported by a positive press release from NYCC, and the recommendations are under active consideration.</p> <p>Our in-house provider services have designed and implemented learning opportunities for colleagues, working with York LGBT Forum. As well as improving the experience of LBGT people who access support, this development will also enhance understanding between colleagues.</p>
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Item 4

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