

North Yorkshire County Council
Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee
6 December 2021
Progress update on equality objectives 2021- 2025

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.

2.0 Background

2.1 The public sector equality duty requires us to prepare and publish one or more equality objectives at least every four years. North Yorkshire County Council's equality objectives 2021 – 2025 were approved in June and reflect the needs of our communities post-Covid.

2.2 The refreshed objectives are being embedded into the performance framework and monitored and reported through quarterly performance reporting to Management Board and Executive.

2.3 The Council has also recently refreshed its [equality, diversity and inclusion policy statement](#). Discussions have taken place at all directorate senior management teams to highlight the commitments in the statement and move forward work to embed these in all areas of the Council.

3.0 Progress with equality objectives 2021 – 2025

3.1 Objective 1: Identify and address inequality as a result of the impact of COVID and work to support vaccine take-up across all communities.

3.1.1 Communication packs about vaccination have been produced in a number of languages and work has been undertaken in partnership to myth bust. The Stronger Communities team have built relationships with key local community members to share appropriate messages.

3.1.2 The Public Health Intelligence Team are working on a report around inequalities in COVID-19-related outcomes.

3.1.3 The COVID-19 outbreak management hub regularly review vaccine uptake rates for different localities and age groups and liaise with the CCG to target low uptake areas.

3.1.4 Actions to reach particular groups have included:

- Vaccination clinic held in Broughton Road Community Centre in Skipton addressing lower uptake in this more ethnically diverse area.
- Partnership work to provide transport service to hub for patients who are not near a public transport routes
- Use of North Yorkshire Learning Disability Partnership Board bulletin to address questions and concerns from the community about vaccination.
- Stronger Communities working with North Yorkshire Youth to reach younger people

3.1.5 All schools have been able to access the Wellbeing for Education Return Training which included a focus on supporting vulnerable learners. 55% of schools in North Yorkshire accessed the training.

3.2 Objective 2: Identify and address inequality in outcomes for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) customers.

- 3.2.1 The Health and Adult Services anti-racist practice group is continuing to raise awareness and improve practice, including co-producing an anti-racist statement. Resources and training opportunities available through the West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health Care Partnership are being shared with colleagues.
- 3.2.2 In a collaboration with the University of York, the Social Work Professional Learning and Development Team are supporting a 'book club' to explore texts on anti-racist practice with Adult Social Care colleagues.
- 3.2.3 Work is being undertaken on the Yorkshire and Humber Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) ethnicity service take-up and insight objective will provide useful comparative data.
- 3.2.4 Public Health have held discussion with NHS partners and will be offering support to Primary Care Networks around the new neighbourhood inequalities service specification which includes a wide range of actions such as ethnicity recording. Specific work is underway with the Nepali community.
- 3.2.5 The BAME data on each district joint strategic needs assessment profile has been updated.
- 3.2.6 A range of resources and content will be shared as part of Black History Month in October and staff are being encouraged to show their support by using a relevant Teams background and email signature during the month. The Safer Communities team are also leading work with disability forums, learning disability partnership board and NYCC colleagues for Hate Crime Awareness Week in the same month. This work has a focus on members of the public being 'upstanders' rather than 'bystanders'.
- 3.2.7 A Community Tensions webinar was held on 24 June as part of Safeguarding Week and a number of multi-agency sessions have also been held, including:
- Hate Crime Awareness Session - approx. 40 attendees. (Linked to Safeguarding Week and Community Tensions webinar.)
 - Hate Crime Awareness 'Train the Trainer' session. 8 attendees.
 - Media literacy 'train the trainer' session. 27 attendees
 - 'Bystander' intervention programme – Train the Trainers session. 25 attendees.
- 3.2.8 Between August and the end of this year North Yorkshire County Council in partnership with district councils will have resettled approximately 120 persons under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (based upon a fair share of the national total in proportion to population). The resettlement programme is funded by the Home Office. Craven, Hambleton, Harrogate, Richmondshire and Selby districts are involved. This aspect has progressed relatively smoothly due to the good partnership work built up over the years in relation to the Syrian refugee resettlement programme.
- 3.2.9 In addition the County Council has been leading the efforts on providing support to the Afghan families in two bridging hotels in North Yorkshire. The bridging hotels are being used until families can be resettled in permanent housing, chiefly in other parts of the UK. Most of these families arrived in the UK in mid to late August on military flights and so arrived with little or no luggage. The support in the hotels required a fast and co-ordinated local response with minimal notice and support given by the Home Office or other government departments. Local staff involved included Early Help, the English as an Additional Language (EAL) service, the Adult Learning and Skills Service, Stronger Communities, Public Health, the Library Service, School Admissions, Home to School transport and schools. A local GP practice in each of the two areas registered the families and undertook health-screening checks.

- 3.2.10 In both areas, the children were in school as quickly as possible and ahead of later published government guidance requesting that school-aged children should be in school no later than 8 weeks following arrival in the bridging accommodation.
- 3.2.11 The Refugee Council is now providing the wrap-around support in the hotels and the Home Office has recently appointed Liaison Officers to visit the hotels on a more frequent basis than has been the case to date. The DWP has also been providing support by going into the hotels to arrange the Universal Credit Claims and to provide general advice on employment and training in the UK.
- 3.2.12 North Yorkshire Youth and North Yorkshire Sport have been employed to provide activities to the children and young people, including at weekends. English language classes for the adults will be starting shortly after some delay necessitated by the need to recruit teachers. A small number of families have been able to leave the hotels after being provided with permanent housing elsewhere in the UK. The Home Office will be trying to allocate families in bridging hotels to permanent housing in the region to try to minimise disruption. However some families in the hotels will be particularly difficult to place in conventional housing because of their large size by UK standards.
- 3.2.13 Scoping is being carried out on a joint strategic needs assessment on migrant health.
- 3.2.14 The Growing Up in North Yorkshire (GUNY) BAME data has been collected in the County summary report. The equality section (pages 22 and 23) shows differences for particular identity groups for Year 6 and Year 10 pupils.
- 3.2.15 GUNY data differences for BAME children and young from 2020 survey (with 2018 BAME data in brackets) from the secondary school report:
- 19% (29%) of pupils responded that they have been bullied at or near school in the last 12 months
 - 49% (26%) of pupils responded that their school deals with bullying 'quite' or 'very' well
 - 15% (28%) responded that their school deals with bullying 'badly'.
- 3.2.16 GUNY data from the 2020 survey for BAME children and young people compared to the 'norm' for all children and young people in the survey from the secondary school report (the average for all secondary school pupils who took part in the survey is in brackets)
- 50% (7%) boys had been called racist insults
 - 29% (4%) girls had been called racist insults
 - 19% (17%) of pupils responded that they have been bullied at or near school in the last 12 months
 - 49% (43%) of pupils responded that their school deals with bullying 'quite' or 'very' well
 - 15% (13%) responded that their school deals with bullying 'badly'.
- 3.2.17 The positive communities steering group are working on a flowchart to identify the support and resources to raise awareness of hate crime with young people and the training and resources that can be provided at each point on the flowchart. Schools have been involved with hate crime awareness sessions and two schools have accessed the Wake Up Call two day course during this period. Eleven workshops were also held with schools and youth groups using the Hate Crime Workshop Kymsgame. 182 young people attended. The positive communities steering group are monitoring attendance at these training sessions along with monitoring the prejudice-based incidents that are reported to the local authority.

3.3 Objective 3: Improve inclusion and diversity of staff working for the County Council.

3.3.1 Workforce data for Quarter 2 is provided below. (Q1 2021/22 is included for comparison purposes).

3.3.2

	Q1 2021/22	Q2 2021/22
% male	23.3%	23.4%
% female	76.7%	76.6%
% of staff who have declared their ethnicity	72.3%	73.4%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the above, % of staff who have said they are BAME • Of the above, % of staff who have said they are White 	2.4%	2.2%
% of staff who have declared disability / no disability	49.0%	57.7%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the above, % of staff who have declared a disability • Of the above, % of staff who have declared no disability 	2.2%	4.0%
Average age of workforce	47.48 years	47.23 years
% of staff over 55 years of age	29.29%	29.14%
% of staff under 25 years of age	4.73%	4.88%
Top 5% of earners (excluding schools)	388	386
Average age	50.6	50.5
% male	36.3%	35.5%
% female	63.7%	64.5%
% BAME (declared)	1.3%	1.3%
% White (declared)	98.7%	98.7%
% declared a disability	2.2%	2.8%
% declared no disability	97.8%	97.2%

3.3.3 The technical problem with underreporting of disability has been resolved and the number of employees who have now reported whether or not they have a disability has increased from 49% to 58% of the total workforce. Of that 58% of the workforce who have declared whether or not they have a disability, the total declaring that they do have a disability has increased from around 2.5% to 4%. There remains further work to be done to encourage more staff to update their equality information.

3.3.4 The average age of the workforce has reduced slightly this quarter, with an increase in the proportion of staff under 25 years to 4.88%. This includes 31 on the graduate programme.

3.3.5 This workforce data is included in a new quarterly report to Management Board.

3.3.6 The latest gender pay gap analysis has seen a continuing decrease in the gender pay gap, reducing to a mean gap of 6.7% (compared to 9.1% the previous year) and a median gap of 2% (down from 7.1% previously) The gender pay gap for March 2021 is currently being calculated. There is a plan to continue to address the gap based on Government Equalities Office commissioned research.

3.3.7 We are awaiting further government guidance on how any ethnic pay gap should be calculated and reported.

3.3.8 We have begun to consider the equality dimension of HR casework. The numbers are relatively low so this will be reported annually. In the first quarter, there appeared to be

disproportionately higher numbers of men involved in conduct, performance and resolving issues at work casework, although this number decreased in Quarter 2.

3.3.9 A number of employee networks have been established with senior manager support:

- Pride Employee (LGBTQ+)
- Gender equality
- Disabled employee
- Value in racial diversity

3.3.10 The staff networks are developing content to present at November's senior manager seminar outlining, through their lived experiences, what is needed to progress relevant issues, and are supporting the review of equality, diversity and inclusion online learning. A programme of monthly podcasts on a range of inclusion topics is ongoing and relevant awareness days are being promoted internally.

3.3.11 There are also a number of other staff groups on Yammer for employees to join: Working Parents, Menopause Support Group, Autism Support Group, Working Carers, and Neurodiverse Staff.

3.3.12 Resourcing Solutions have updated the Council's careers webpage, including the diversity and inclusion section. This includes relevant policy documents as well as showcasing the employee's network groups and recent work on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI).

3.3.13 New and updated content for the Council's intranet EDI page has been created including relevant contacts and signposting to training and resources.

3.3.14 New EDI templates have been created for social media to give a more uniform design to the EDI content. The Instagram page, previously named NYCCJobs has now been renamed LifeAtNYCC to reflect its focus on the culture of NYCC through EDI.

3.3.15 The mandatory online equality and diversity package for staff is being re-developed and work is underway to provide comprehensive support to managers and staff in relation to skills and understanding. Staff networks have been consulted and provided feedback and suggestions on structure, content, additional learning support and existent gaps in current training and learning.

3.3.16 Collaborative working with partner organisations has included:

- Regional response to ADCS' cultural competence survey
- Attendance at West Yorkshire and Harrogate Race Equality network meetings
- Representation at EDI Leaders Roundtable hosted by TALiNT Partners and Indeed – the only local authority represented.

3.3.17 A recruitment and retention plan for minority ethnic staff is currently in development in Health and Adult Services.

3.4 Objective 4: Improve health and educational outcomes amongst Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT) communities in the county.

3.4.1 Collaboration spurred through pandemic related interventions with the GRT community has developed into ongoing partnership approach to tackling inequalities and improving access to services for residents of Tara Park in Ryedale. NYCC including Children and Families Service (Early Help), Stronger Communities and Living Well are working in collaboration with Ryedale District Council and VCS partners. Alongside a range of developing aims, so far this has specifically helped shape:

- Dedicated CYPS staff visiting with RDC staff to build relationships

- A new RDC support worker role
- Involvement of the Grow and Learn (School Readiness) VCS co-ordinator to begin to stimulate activity and inclusion onsite.
- Links have been made to the CCG and GP practice to address non-registration especially for those with long-term care needs.

3.4.2 A deep dive around improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families, including a focus on vulnerable groups (looked after children, military, English as an additional language, children in need, child protection, Gypsy, Roma, Traveller) is being undertaken.

3.5 Objective 5: Ensure service delivery and commissioning, particularly social care and public health, is inclusive of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans + adults.

3.5.1 In 2019, (HWNY) engaged with LGBT+ adults in North Yorkshire to understand their experience of accessing health and social care, with a particular focus on mental health services. The recommendations from the HWNY report are being included in the new North Yorkshire Public Mental Health and Prevention Strategic Plan 2021-23 which is being developed.

3.5.2 An LGBT+ e-learning module co-designed with an LGBT trainer is now in place for provider staff and available to all staff. It aims to help staff meet the needs of older lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people using Health and Adult Services.

3.5.3 A Trans awareness session was delivered to HAS Leadership Forum in September which included a presentation from a person with lived experience who is also helping with improving practice. 80 participants attended. An LGB session is being planned for the January 2022 Leadership Forum.

3.5.4 The Health and Adult Services' equality, diversity and inclusion group is looking at the Rainbow Badge scheme for health and social services.

3.6 Objective 6: Improve wellbeing, inclusion and feeling safe for vulnerable groups of children and young people.

3.6.1 The Growing Up in North Yorkshire (GUNY) BAME data has been collected in the [County summary report](#). The equality section (pages 22 and 23) shows differences for particular identity groups for Year 6 and Year 10 pupils.

3.6.2 The data has been shared with a range of partners. The data does indicate that bullying rates do remain higher for pupils in these different social identity groups. Questions were also included in the 2020 survey for secondary aged pupils asking about their experience of sexual harassment and witnessing sexual harassment. This is supporting schools to respond to the Ofsted review into sexual harassment and peer on peer abuse in schools.

3.6.3 60% of North Yorkshire schools have registered with the North Yorkshire Healthy Schools award and of those schools who have registered 35% have achieved an award. This includes 40 schools with the emotional health and wellbeing theme. A number of good practice examples are available for schools to see and access when they register with the award. These are also used in training sessions with schools. We are waiting for confirmation of continued funding for the award beyond March 2022. If confirmed then the Equality and Diversity enhanced healthy schools award will be developed in the spring term 2022.

3.6.4 The LGBT youth groups, young carers work and service champions are still in place and working with the identified children and young people. LGBT training for professionals who work with children and young people is available through the early help training programme.

3.7 Objective 7: Support digital inclusion for North Yorkshire’s communities and ensure that digital access to our services 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.

3.7.1 Work is ongoing to improve accessibility of the Council’s website in accordance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1. Our current score using the Sitemorse accessibility report (an independent audit tool) is 6/10. We expect this score to increase when running the report following the deployment of recent improvements, listed below:

- 106,870 accessibility fails raised in the Sept 2019 Sitemorse report have been fixed, with 15,515 (14%) remaining.
- Introduction of new website functionality to aid ongoing resolution and management of accessibility issues (Governance system, Accessibility module, new ‘document’ content type)
- Code improvements made on priority areas
- PDFs not meeting accessibility standards – removal ongoing (600 removed)
- 1000 older press releases removed
- Accessibility statement updated which focuses on resolution of priority issues by end of 2021.

3.7.2 A review of the application of the Accessible information Standard to relevant systems and processes across the council is being scoped.

3.7.3 Assisted digital sessions were carried out in libraries as follows:

Year/quarter	No of sessions
2020/21	1062
Q1 2021/22	514
Q2 2021/22	882

4.0 Other examples of EDI related work

4.1 **Accessible Transport Group** - In September an initial meeting was held to explore the feasibility of an accessible transport group. This meeting which was instigated by NYCC and facilitated by Inclusion North, was attended by representatives from all directorates plus members of North Yorkshire Disability Forum. The initial meeting was largely an introductory meeting but there was an action agreed to work up the terms of reference with Inclusion North, which will ensure future meetings are worthwhile and will help manage expectations. When the terms of reference are agreed the group will start to meet to identify issues that can be resolved within the scope of the group.

4.2 **Learning disabilities** – A deep dive report into the needs of people with learning disabilities and the next steps has been published. Public Health are considering how commissioned services meet the needs of people with learning disabilities and/or mental health issues.

4.3 **Libraries – sunflower lanyard scheme** - The hidden disabilities sunflower lanyard scheme has been extended across all libraries in North Yorkshire. The aim is to enhance the library experience for customers with hidden disabilities, such as autism, dementia, visual or hearing impairment and anxiety following a successful pilot at Harrogate library. Customers can pick up a free sunflower lanyard in the library. It acts as a discreet sign that they may need extra time or support when using the library. Staff and volunteers

have had awareness training and are happy to assist. The sunflower design is recognised by numerous organisations, including many shops, airports and supermarkets. Using the same design means customers can use their lanyard with organisations across the UK in the knowledge that the community will recognise its meaning.

- 4.7 **Active Weight Management** - As part of the Government's Obesity Strategy and investment in Weight Management services, local authorities have been awarded a grant this year to expand and develop adult weight management (AWM) services. North Yorkshire Public Health commissions an established AWM service, delivered by 6 different provider organisations across the county. The funding is being used to increase availability of 1:1 support for individuals taking part in the programme and develop bespoke programmes for specific target groups who may face barriers in accessing the programme or whose needs may not be met by the existing programme structure. These include those living with mental illness, those from ethnic minority communities and those with learning disabilities. Two of the AWM service providers have decided to develop adapted programmes for those with learning disabilities and there will be four programmes delivered - in Harrogate, Scarborough and Ryedale areas. They have been developed in consultation with self-advocates (people with learning disabilities) and those working with people with learning disabilities. They started in September and will provide up to 6 months of support for physical activity and healthy eating for people with learning disabilities and their parents/carers.
- 4.8 **Pregnancy incentives trial** - In April 2021, Living Well Smokefree launched its first ever pregnancy incentives trial to encourage more pregnant smokers to quit smoking throughout their pregnancy and beyond. Incentivising quit attempts within particular smoking populations is backed by a strong and positive research base and a proportion of budget underspend has been used to initiate this trial. As part of the trial, pregnant smokers are able to earn up to £200 in Love2Shop vouchers (£50 at 4 key points along the quit journey) to accompany the 1:1 behavioural support and stop smoking medications they receive from LWSF advisors. The trial has a clear focus on pregnant smokers - one of Living Well Smokefree's priority populations. Following an Equality Impact Assessment we have ensured it is also inclusive of pregnant smokers with other protected characteristics such as disability and those on low income.
- 4.9 **Disability access – county forums** - North Yorkshire Disability Forum (NYDF) and North Yorkshire Learning Disability Partnership Board (NYLDPB) supported by the HAS Participation and Engagement (P&E) Team, have recently worked with several teams to develop solutions and to promote staff awareness of accessibility and reasonable adjustments, across NYCC services and within our wider communities. This includes testing a new accessibility icon for the external website, co-producing disability awareness refresher training for customer service centre staff and producing a video for new managers and staff in HAS in Harrogate district. NYDF and NYLDPB have also been raising awareness about the importance of Changing Places, and working with district councils to access new government funding to install Changing Places in existing buildings: [Changing Places Toilets \(changing-places.org\)](https://www.changing-places.org) In addition, NYDF is developing a campaign to ensure the availability of working hearing loops, and has worked with colleagues in BES to contribute feedback about accessibility to work on Transport-Related Social Exclusion. NYDF and NYLDPB co-chairs co-designed and co-presented a session for the Care and Independence Overview and Scrutiny Committee in June, sharing the story of how forums' participation and engagement continued during the Covid lockdowns, rising to the challenges of digital engagement whilst still including people who did not have digital access. The HAS P&E Team have produced a report on digital access and inclusion based on the experiences over the pandemic, with a number of recommendations to improve digital inclusion.

5.0 Further information

- NYCC [Equality, diversity and inclusion 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/equal-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.
- 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.

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16 November 2021