

CROYDON COUNCIL

EQUALITY ANNUAL REPORT 2014

**Appendix to item 7
Cabinet 19 January 2015**

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Foreword

As the portfolio holder for the community and equality agenda, I am pleased to introduce the Council's equality annual report for 2014-15.

Equality and inclusion are integral to everything we do as a Council, whether it is the services we provide, the money we spend or the people we employ. A fundamental tenet of our pledge to be ambitious for Croydon is to achieve the highest standards of excellence in equalities practice, working closely with our partners in the public, business and voluntary sectors.

This annual report sets out some significant steps the Council has taken over the past year to embed equality throughout the organisation. It also includes some examples of good practice that we have developed to ensure that our services are fair, inclusive and accessible to our residents. This is a success story which provides a strong foundation to achieve the excellence we aspire to.

I am looking forward to an exciting year ahead. The establishment of the Opportunity and Fairness Commission provides a rare opportunity to examine some of the core issues which create inequality in our society. The Commission will gather evidence, consult widely and make recommendations about the practical steps that can be taken in Croydon to make sure that fairness, equality and inclusion underpin decisions that affect the people of Croydon. Through the work of the Opportunity and Fairness Commission we aim to secure a stronger social contract between the people of the borough and develop a cohesive community with opportunities for all who live and work here. The Commission's recommendations will inform and influence key decisions made by the Council and its partners in the Local Strategic Partnership to address local challenges relating to equality and inclusion.

Changing attitudes and behaviour in relation to domestic abuse and sexual violence (DASV) is one of the key priorities for the Council's equalities forward agenda. You will see in this report that a three year strategy has been agreed to take forward a new and radical approach to reducing the incidence and the impact of domestic abuse and sexual violence. We have launched a high profile programme of public awareness which includes promoting the global 'White Ribbon' campaign and a petition to create a national register of domestic abuse offenders.

As a new administration we have a clearly stated aim to be a Council which, at all levels, recognises and reflects the diversity of the borough, the need to embed equality and inclusion in all that we do and provide the leadership to encourage and support our partners in Croydon to share this ambition. Over the coming years we will be working towards achieving this aim and I look forward to highlighting the progress we have made in the next Equalities Annual Report.

Councillor Mark Watson
Cabinet Member for Safety and Justice

THEME 1

STRONGER COMMUNITIES

The Council's equality priority is to work with our partners to:

- Encourage safer communities by reducing violence
- Build stronger communities by reducing deprivation

The actions that the Council agreed to take to deliver this are:

- Ensure everyone, especially women and same sex couples, have the confidence to report domestic violence, rape and sexual offences and know they can trust organisations that work together to deal with the perpetrators appropriately and effectively.
- Ensure people have the confidence to report hate crime, homophobic, religious and race, and know they can trust organisations that work together to deal with the perpetrators appropriately.
- Reduce violence especially serious youth violence and that which involves knives or guns, in particular among men living in the north of the borough.
- Reduce deprivation especially in the poorest areas.
- Support young people with complex needs earlier so they don't end up as first time offenders in the youth justice system especially those from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds.
- Make it easier for different communities to organise themselves and have a greater voice in the things that matter most to them.
- Ensure more people are satisfied with their local area and the services they receive.
- Encourage more people to have trust and confidence in public institutions especially among young people with the Council and Police.

In 2014 we have:

- Set up an **Opportunity and Fairness Commission** for Croydon. The commission will examine inequality issues in the borough, collate relevant evidence and make recommendations about how the Council and other organisations (public, private as well as the community and voluntary sector) can use their roles and influence, both individually and collectively, to reduce inequalities and increase the perception and experience of fairness within the local economy and local communities. *Further information is available in good practice story 1*
- Set up a **partnership board to drive forward the work around domestic abuse and sexual violence**, developed a **three year partnership domestic abuse and sexual violence strategy** and **strategic plan** and undertaken extensive **joint media/ marketing and communication campaigns** to raise awareness and drive to change attitudes and behaviours towards domestic violence and sexual abuse across the borough *Further information is*

available in good practice story 2.

- **Increased appropriate referrals to the Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC).** Footfall to the Family Justice Centre has increased by 300%, seeing on average 12 clients per day.
- Set up a **Stronger Communities Partnership Board.** The Board will oversee and co-ordinate the development of Croydon's communities agenda. It aims to ensure that people of Croydon have a sense of ambition, pride and belonging by promoting fairness, social cohesion and integration, supporting Croydon's cultural offer, tackling inequality and providing an environment for a thriving voluntary, community and faith sector.
- **Supported local voluntary and community groups and SME's (Small and Medium Enterprises)** to develop the skills, experience and know-how to take part in Croydon's commissioning process. *Further information is available in good practice story 3.*
- Organised a number of meetings between the Council and its statutory and voluntary sector partners. At each meeting a range of issues around equality and social inclusion were discussed. Examples include the **Social Inclusion Partnership Group** that consisted of themed meetings on disability hate crime, armed forces reservists and a **hate crime seminar.** *Further information is available in good practice stories 5 and 6.*
- Worked with partners to provide a range of interventions to support households affected by welfare reforms and developed a strategic approach to promoting **greater financial inclusion** for people in more vulnerable and deprived communities in the borough.
- Extended community networks and relations and organised a **full programme of community meetings.** The meetings aim to provide a communication channel between community groups, Councillors and Council representatives. Community representatives set the agenda and the relevant Council representatives are expected to provide a direct response. These consisted of community meetings with the Hindu and Muslim community. Other activities include 'walkabouts' and **web-based activities.**
- Worked in partnership with **Faiths Together in Croydon** and organised a series of **community events to mark key dates in the faith calendar,** such as Eid- ul- Adha, Diwali and Christmas. *Further information is available in good practice story 9.*
- Worked in partnership with our **community partners** to deliver an extensive **programme of events to Celebrate Age and Silver Sunday, Black History Month and LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) History Month.** *Further information is available in good practice stories 10 and 11.*
- Worked closely with our **community partners** and enabled over 60 street parties to take place as part of our **Big Lunch initiative** with a marked increase in Big Lunches in the north of the borough.
- Worked in partnership with community groups and other partners to support the delivery of the **London Road Carnival** and a number of other **festivals.**

Good Practice 1

Working in partnership to deliver opportunity and fairness

Croydon Congress – launch of the [Croydon Opportunity and Fairness Commission](#)

Croydon Congress is the twice-yearly gathering of the Local Strategic Partnership. It is designed to bring together the key stakeholders and service users in the borough. The most recent Congress marked the launch of Croydon's **Opportunity and Fairness Commission**.

The proposal for establishing an Opportunity and Fairness Commission for Croydon supports the Council's ambition to reach out to all of its communities and provide the support needed to lead independent, healthy, and productive lives. It is also a clear recognition of the fact that the borough's overall future prosperity will be best assured where all local citizens are able to share in any benefits of this.

The event was the very start of the process and provided an opportunity for Congress participants to contribute towards setting the direction of travel for the commission. Around 150 participants attended congress including representatives from the Council, local statutory partners, businesses, the community and voluntary sector, young people's representatives and some job seekers.

The keynote speaker was Matthew Taylor, Chief Executive of the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce followed by lively group discussions and interactive voting that helped identify key themes that the Opportunity and Fairness Commission could explore in further detail and define potential key at the tables.

The positive feedback from participants, some of which is noted below:

"This was a really valuable gathering of agencies/people and the ideas that came out of it will be very helpful for the future of Croydon"

"Frank discussion and sharing ideas is always beneficial"

"The best congress meeting I have attended. Really practical and thought provoking. A great beginning for the fairness commission"

Good practice 2

Supporting work to address the domestic abuse and sexual violence

New three year strategy

The Council working with the Local Strategic Partnership has developed a three year borough-wide strategy that sets out its partnership priorities from 2015 to 2018. The intention for the Council and the Local Strategic Partnership is to drive a change in attitudes and behaviours towards domestic abuse and sexual violence throughout the Borough. The strategy aims to take a more radical approach to reducing the incidence and impact of domestic abuse and sexual violence in the borough. In the longer term it will reduce costs through prevention and earlier intervention.

The views of DASV (domestic violence and sexual abuse) victims and survivors are a cornerstone of the strategy and as such these have informed practice and operational delivery. The strategy also identifies the national, regional and local policy context and reflects the prevalence of domestic violence and sexual abuse in the Borough.

Petition to create a national register of domestic abuse offenders

The Local Strategic Partnership will run a petition to create a national register of domestic abuse offenders. The petition aims to work towards reducing the number of 'serial' domestic abuse offenders, ensuring domestic abuse offenders are unable to simply move to a different area and keep abusing and support and help enforce Claire's Law.

Multi-Agency Training Package

A multi-agency training package has been developed involving workshops that were delivered to teams across the borough. Regular multi-agency support and advice sessions were delivered at the Family Justice Centre. This greater knowledge has supported improved multi agency pathways that have been agreed by champions and agencies.

Media Campaign

An extensive joint media/ marketing and communication campaign raised awareness across the borough bringing together police and council resources. The impact of this has been evidenced by the increasing contact with the Family Justice Centre and the work of local newspapers in highlighting key issues.

The campaign will form a strong platform for the next phase of development which will include Croydon becoming a 'White Ribbon' council as well as a more concerted approach with employers.

The Early Intervention Support Services worked in partnership with the police, to deliver the '**Are You Safe?**' campaign.

The project helped to tackle the pervasive issue of domestic abuse and sexual violence, through prevention and by reducing the number of incidents. The key outcomes of the campaign were:

- increase in the use of whole **family interventions** to reduce the incidence and impact of domestic abuse and sexual violence
- increase in the percentage of schools with a '**healthy relationship**' programme that

tackle issues of domestic abuse and sexual violence such as values versus violence

- increase in the number of universal services where the designated child protection lead is signed up as the **DASV champion**
- increase in the number of women experiencing domestic abuse and sexual violence receiving **support and interventions**.
- **increase of 26% of reported incidents of domestic abuse** which indicates that as a partnership the message (local and national) about domestic abuse and sexual violence (DASV) being unacceptable and the need to be report is working well.

The campaign resulted in positive outcomes for residents as expressed in an excerpt from a letter written by a resident:

“This is for all the staff that helped me through a most difficult time in my life”. I know that without FJC (Family Justice Centre)’s help and support, I would have found it difficult as I didn’t think anyone can believe me, but you guys really did help, just knowing you were there”

Good Practice 3

Promoting fairness and inclusion through the commissioning process

Commissioning Support offer for local voluntary sector and small and medium sized enterprises (SME's)

Croydon's Corporate Commissioning Strategy places an important focus on putting residents and the community at the heart of our service delivery and ensuring that fairness and equality outcomes are attained throughout the commissioning process.

The Council is working on supporting local voluntary and community groups and SME's to develop the skills, experience and know-how to take part in Croydon's commissioning process.

The Commissioning Support Team is actively providing meaningful support to local organisations to help them better understand the Council's commissioning processes and governance arrangements as well as develop their own internal business processes and capacity. Key achievements during 2014 include:

- commissioning support offer to local voluntary sector and SMEs;
- programme of support offer that provides a various range of events, action set workshops and one-to-one sessions that enable local providers to be commissioning ready and competitive in public service delivery;
- engagement with 250 providers in various support sessions including BME groups, disability organisations and women groups;
- buyer event where 13 local SME's used Council support;
- roundtable session with Croydon's Chambers of Commerce;
- support for the South London Jobs Fair and engagement with 19 suppliers.

The expert commissioning sessions helped voluntary sector organisations and social enterprises understand key issues they need to address internally, while also showcasing how diversifying income, adapting to local need and being innovative is essential to sustainability and being commissioned.

Below are some comments from potential providers that attended the Expert Commissioning sessions

"The Commissioning Support Team have provided a friendly and informative service and have put in place a series of workshops during the open stage which is very helpful"

"You have managed to alleviate my existing anxieties regarding the tendering process, and explained what is involved simply, articulately and in terms that are easily understood. I think it is a fantastic that your team are offering this support for the third sector."

"Very good/informative and necessary for an SME."

"Helped understand the importance of social value to our business and how this knowledge will help with future bids"

Good practice 4

Working to address youth unemployment

Croydon Council's Apprenticeship Scheme

The Council aims to improve the level of youth employment in the borough through its apprenticeship scheme. This scheme offers residents a real job with training and supports the Council to increase the use of apprenticeships within the organisation.

The apprenticeship scheme gives Croydon residents the opportunity to **earn and learn towards a nationally recognised qualification**. The apprenticeships take up to two years to complete and cover a wide range of roles in the council for example business administration, teaching assistant, health and social care and finance. Qualifications include level 2(intermediate), level 3 (advanced apprenticeship) and level 4 (higher apprenticeship).

The apprenticeship is being delivered in partnership with five main training providers namely Croydon College, John Ruskin College, Hawk training, Kaplan training and All Inclusive training. The providers undertake the recruitment, training and teaching aspects of the programme. Other partners include local colleges and CALAT (Croydon Adult Learning and Training) who are looking into developing on apprenticeship programme.

The Council coordinates a monthly apprenticeship forum that gives the apprentices the opportunity to meet on a frequent basis, share their experience and receive support and guidance. Apprentices that have gone on to secure permanent roles within the organisation are invited to share their experiences and offer encouragement.

The apprentice scheme contains residents from a diverse age range, consisting of apprentices from 17 - 37 years old. The average age of apprentices is 19 years of age.

Between April and November 2014, eight apprentices got permanent jobs and six progressed in their roles. A large number of the apprentices on the scheme progressed to the next level of the apprenticeship, i.e. level 2 to level 3 or went on to get permanent roles within the Council. The apprentices were also given the opportunity to attend local events such as Apprenticeship Fairs.

In 2015, Apprenticeship Graduation Ceremonies will be taking place across England to celebrate the achievements of young people that have completed a Higher or Advanced Level Apprenticeship placement. Croydon Council was successful in bidding for support from the National Apprenticeship Service to pilot and part-fund a ceremony in Croydon. The main aim of the event will be to celebrate the graduates and raises the profile of apprenticeships to all stakeholders including businesses, young people and local schools.

In preparation for this, the Council's Economic Development Team will be launching a 'Best Apprenticeship' competition. The winning video will be expected to share the employer and apprentice experiences, include a skills demonstration and demonstrate the benefits that apprenticeships can deliver to both the apprentice and employers.

Good practice 5

Working in partnership to address social exclusion

Social Inclusion Partnership Group

The Social Inclusion Partnership Group (SIPG) meets on a quarterly basis to discuss the current issues of deprivation and disadvantage that the borough faces and defines practical actions to address them. The group provides the opportunities for residents to maximise their potential by working in partnership to reduce local inequality, social exclusion, addressing long-term disadvantage and respond to the challenges of the recent recession.

The SIPG achieves this by working with representatives from a range of partners including the community, businesses, and voluntary organisations, bringing their expertise, perspectives and resources to respond to local challenges.

During the last year, the SIPG has continued to ensure that issues that affect some of the borough's most marginalised residents are effectively considered in the development of new policies, the commissioning of services, and the action is taken to address any gaps in provision.

The Social Inclusion Partnership Group has held 3 meetings this year that have focused on the following issues:

Disability hate crime - The SIPG explored disability hate crime and the challenges the borough faces. It discussed the reasons for under-reporting and defining actions that can be taken to increase public confidence and raise awareness of hate crime in the borough.

Armed Forces Reservists - The SIPG examined how the borough can manage the needs of service families (beyond the transition to a more reservist armed forces), the local impact of Future Force 2020 and discussed inclusion issues that would potentially affect reservists such as health, welfare, employment and housing.

Social Isolation - The meeting examined various aspects of social isolation such as the causes of social isolation, tackling social isolation, national good practice, local services that are available and case studies of successful initiatives.

Actions from the meetings are being taken forward by the Council and local partners who are continuing to work in collaboration on initiatives to address social exclusion challenges that the borough faces.

Good practice 6

Working for a safer and stronger community

Hate Crime Seminar

Hate crime is widespread social issue that has a serious impact on its victims, families and communities. committed to **working in partnership with our statutory and voluntary sectors to tackle and address**

The Council held a seminar to examine how the borough can address hate crime through:

- increasing the rate of reporting by victims and witnesses;
- raising awareness of hate crime;
- supporting victims of hate crime;
- dealing with perpetrators of hate crime.

Presentations focused on the London-wide picture of hate crime, the local picture of hate crime, examples of a victim's experience of disability hate crime.

The seminar was attended by around 80 delegates from a range of statutory and third sector agencies including organisations such as the MPS, Victim Support, Croydon Mediation Service, Croydon Disability Forum, Croydon Area Gay Society and Faiths Together in Croydon.

Information and recommendations from the seminar will be taken forward by the Stronger Communities Partnership to examine improvements to the approach that the borough uses to provide advice and support on hate crime.

Good Practice 7

Working in partnership to support active communities

Active Communities Fund

The Council's small grants programme has been expanded during 2014 to become the **Active Communities Fund**. From 2015, the budget will be £150,000 per annum. A programme of 'micro grants' of up to £1,000, with a fast track application process has also been introduced.

The small grants programme awards grants of up to £5,000 to Croydon based groups that have an income of less than £30,000. Applications are invited to fund activities which contribute towards meeting at least one of the programme's priorities. The priorities for funding for 2014 were to:

- Encourage local pride and belonging;
- Improve the network of advice and support to individuals and families affected by welfare reforms;
- Help people care for one another's health and wellbeing;
- Manage local publically owned assets for community benefit ;
- Promote new ways of working with young people and help them make their voices heard.

Details of the funding programme were made available through information on the [Council's website](#) , twitter, direct emailing to about 2000 recipients and using other voluntary sector networks. Training sessions were held to support potential applicants who might otherwise not use the online process.

The applications were considered by a panel of community representatives that consisted of trustees from Croydon Voluntary Action and Croydon BME Forum and representatives from Croydon Voluntary Sector Alliance and Croydon Youth Council. The panel was chaired by the Cabinet Member responsible for the voluntary sector.

28 projects were awarded funding in 2014. They included:

- Film related activity for and by young people with learning difficulties;
- A range of activities for young people, particularly from the Kurdish community;
- Replacing and updating information boards at Selsdon Woods;
- Programme of support for young people in abusive relationships;
- Awareness raising in schools and support groups and counselling for victims of female genital mutilation;
- Weekly osteoporosis and falls prevention classes for over 65s to be held at Coulsdon Community Centre;
- Support for the Crystal Palace Overground and Purley Festivals

Good practice 8

Using Asset Based Community Development to create cohesive communities

Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Community Connectors Project

The Council's **Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Community Connectors Project** was shortlisted for the European Diversity Award and the M J Award in 2014.

The project is based on a unique six stepping stones approach to community development. The integral stepping stones are finding community connectors; mapping assets; identifying community building themes; building connections; identifying match funds and celebration and planning.

The project used a radical and creative approach to community engagement that supports local communities to build capacity, to organise and have a greater voice in three of the most deprived wards in the borough, significantly affected by the riots of London riots in 2011.

The Council worked in partnership with local voluntary sector partners to deliver the project, with mentoring, support and guidance from national experts Nature Development. Part-time community builders were appointed for each ward. They identified 'community connectors' – well linked people in their community who had learning conversations in their area to find out what people care enough to do something about, what would help them to act on it and what can they offer.

Local people were then empowered to develop initiatives to strengthen the community, with access to small pots of matched funding. A series of memorable, well attended events took place including **ideas fairs**, where people came together to share stories and project ideas, leading to sustainable projects with increased local support.

A '**community of practice**' was convened once a month as a testing ground to build collaboration between Council and other partners from the public sectors, voluntary and community sector, local businesses and politicians. An online neighbourhood www.talk2croydon.co.uk/ABCD was created and became a valuable source of information and key communication route.

There were good levels of participation in the project; in particular communities that are traditionally under-represented. Amongst the connectors, 21% of were young people, 31% of connectors were from a black background and 29% from an Asian background.

The project has strengthened volunteering, encouraged individuals to be more community-minded and created social support activities that have the potential to become sustainable, community-led enterprises.

There is evidence of increased knowledge of local community assets and a clear improvement in how community members taking part in the project (over 300) felt about their area by the end of the project.

Croydon now has a national reputation for leading on the application of ABCD.

Good practice 9

Promoting understanding and celebrating difference

Faith Events in Croydon

The Council works in partnership with faith communities to mark key events in the faith calendar each year. One of the **key faith events** the Council celebrates is **Eid-UI-Fitr** (the Festival of Fast-Breaking).

The **Eid-u-Fitr event** was planned and organised in partnership with a broad group of representatives from across Croydon's diverse Muslim community. The event was held at Croydon Town Hall and was very well-received by an estimated 100 people who attended.

The Council received positive feedback from members of the community. Below is an excerpt of a 'thank you' quote that was received;

"Well done. Great event ... 100% enjoyed by all that I spoke to. Wonderful effort ... Looking forward to more community events at the town hall. Keep me in the loop and I will do my best to support the community. Keep up the good work!"

The events celebratory nature benefitted all those who attend, irrespective of faith.

Good practice 10

Celebrating difference and promoting inclusion

LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) History Month

Croydon Council worked in partnership with the LGBT community, the Metropolitan Police, the NHS, local schools, colleges, the wider community and local LGBT groups such as CAGS (Croydon Area Gay Society), Silver Rainbow and Trans Pals to plan and deliver an extensive programme of events throughout February to mark and celebrate **LGBT History month**.

The opening reception was organised by the LGBT History Month steering group and was attended by over 80 people. The event included a moving personal account from James Dawson, award-nominated author and role model at the organisation Stonewall, and two poems from a local resident.

There were also performances from Rainbows Across Borders (who support LGBT asylum seekers who are fleeing persecution of oppressive homophobic / trans-phobic regimes), Shirley High School and the BRIT school. The performances consisted of singing, dance and drama and highlighted issues affecting the community such as the impact of repressive regimes on LGBT people, civil partnerships and marriage and coming out and acceptance. After the event there was an opportunity for participants to network and share experiences.

Other events that were organised as a part of the LGBT History Month programme include a display in the Central Library that consisted of exhibitions by the Bridge Sexual and Gender Identity Youth Group, a photo montage of gay musicians by CAGS (Croydon Area Gay society) and an exhibition by LGBT community groups in Croydon.

There was also an LGBT History Museum trail, in the Museum of Croydon and a screening of 'It Goes with Shoes' a feature length documentary about gay rights icon and performer Bette Bourne, currently part of the BFI London Lesbian & Gay Film Festival.

Good practice 11

Promoting inclusion and celebrating difference

Celebrating Age and Silver Sunday week

The Council organised a week long programme of events between Wednesday 1st –Wednesday 8th October to celebrate age and mark Silver Sunday. The aim was to celebrate the contribution older people have made to our society, raise awareness of the challenges we face in an aging society and organise community led events to reach out to older people, their families and friends.

The Council worked with a number partners such as Age UK, Croydon BME Forum, libraries, Fusion Leisure Centres, Croydon College, Independent Age, OPeN (Older People's Network), Croydon Commitment, Croydon Clinical Commissioning Group, Oasis Academy Coulsdon, Healthy Living Hub, Museum of Croydon, and Croydon Care Solutions to plan and deliver 120 key events and activities during the week.

The programme of consisted of a range of activities for older people such as social events physical activities, intergenerational activities, information technology (ITea) sessions and the provision of information and advice on health and hobbies. The highlights included:

- Tea with music at Fairfield Halls with performances from Oasis Academy Coulsdon. The event was attended by around 150 residents from care homes across the Borough and had representation from BME and disability groups;
- Digital Inclusion World War 1 Centenary Event. An opportunity to mingle and share stories, photos, memories and experiences about the First World War over a cup of tea;
- Croydon Council and Age UK Techy Tea Party - the aim of the session was to encourage older residents to gain confidence in going online. The session was attended by 13 attendees and had representation from BME (Black and Minority ethnic) and disability groups;
- Croydon College intergenerational event. The event was attended by around 60 older people;
- OPEN (Older People's Network) wider meeting and celebration including - Age UK Croydon choir, poetry, armchair exercise session, information sharing and cultural buffet;
- Croydon BME Forum 'Walk and Talk' in conjunction with the Ethnic Minority Cancer Awareness Month and the British Heart Foundation. For BME elders who were keen to get active and healthy, providing vital support that they otherwise might not get. The cancer prevention awareness sessions were supported by invited specialist speakers.

The Council received a huge amount of positive feedback from events that went on throughout the week:

"We enjoyed ourselves very much. Many thanks for your hospitality and meeting the students was a pleasure which we will treasure. They were great fun and encouragement which we hope will carry them in good stead for their future endeavours. Once again many thanks for the hospitality".

"This was really enjoyable – we had lots of fun!" (rhyme time)

"We liked the story about the grandmas!" (story time)

“Hope these sessions will continue - I enjoyed meeting people of my own age. The building is lovely and so were the people running it and those attending”

Good practice 12 Bringing communities together to remember service personnel

Commemoration of the declaration of World War 1

In this centenary year, to mark the outbreak of the First World War. Croydon contributed to a national occasion with the ceremonial extinguishing of a candle.

As part of the event, a reception was held in the Town Hall, with attendees from across the military, families including the borough's oldest soldiers. The evening began with a Mayoral reception at the Town Hall then the Council (Mayor's Office and Chief Executive's Office), the Royal British Legion, the 'Lights Out' Team and representatives for the London Borough of Croydon. Approximately 100 people attended the Mayoral reception and welcomed members of the public for the lighting of the candle and Mayor's speech.

As the first London Borough to sign an Armed Forces Community Covenant, Croydon recognises the need for and support for service personnel and their families, as well as reservists, veterans and cadet groups. For this night plus the associated press coverage indicates this aim was achieved.

The success of the event is summed up in a message from Lights Out producer:

"One week on from Lights Out we would like to extend huge thanks to you for taking part and for your invaluable emotive and poignant evening which touched millions of people giving them the opportunity to reflect in their own way. You, it was a huge success and we could not have achieved this without your help."

Good practice 13 External recognition for our work on the equality and inclusion agenda

Equality and Diversity Awards to recognise our good practice

The Council's work on promoting equality and inclusion has been recognised nationally and the European level. The organisation has been shortlisted for three awards for the work it has undertaken in partnership with local communities to promote inclusion and improving well-being. The awards include:

- **European Diversity Award** – Community Project of the year
- **Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (enei)** – Community Impact Award
- **M J Award** - Excellence in Community Engagement Category

THEME 2

CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LEARNING

The Council's equality priority is to work with our partners to:

- Improve economic outcomes of young people and adults by increasing opportunities to be in education, employment or training
- Improve outcomes for children by providing a better start in life
- Achieve better learning outcomes for children and young people by narrowing the attainment gap for those who are vulnerable
- Achieve better outcomes for children and young people by increasing the proportion that say they are listened to and able to influence

The actions that the Council agreed to take to deliver this are:

- Reduce child poverty especially in the most deprived areas of the borough.
- Increase the number of young people in education, employment or training especially among those aged 16- 24, young parents, carers, disabled people, children looked after in care and those with special educational needs (SEN).
- Narrow the attainment gap between different groups of children at key stage two (KS2) and GCSE especially among those from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, children with special educational needs (SEN), carers, young people who receive free schools meals and are looked after by the local authority (LAC or in care).
- Increase the number of young people engaged in an apprenticeship and young people that have gained qualifications by 19.
- Reduce school absence and exclusion especially among children and young people who are vulnerable because of their circumstances as well as those from White and Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds.
- Support young people have confidence to report bullying and harassment, especially those who experience discrimination, and trust in organisations to deal with it appropriately.
- Reduce the childhood obesity gap between boys and girls especially those from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds living in deprived areas.
- Increase the number of looked after children who are adopted.
- Provide more opportunities for young people to have their say about and influence the things that concern them especially among those who are vulnerable such as carers, children who are looked after in care or who live in deprived areas.

In 2014 we have:

- Implemented **Croydon Best Start**, a multi-agency model that aims to **improve universal and early intervention services** for children from conception to aged five and their families;
- Developed **support for vulnerable families in Croydon's early intervention arrangements**. Work is being undertaken to develop internal processes alongside new Early Intervention Service and launch an electronic system for all early help activity;
- **Worked in partnership with schools** to challenge any underachievement and support improvement, including through partnerships with Academy chains and other good or outstanding schools where necessary. These partnerships are designed to bring about rapid improvement and develop capacity for sustained improvement in standards, quality of teaching and effectiveness of leadership and management;
- **Supported achievement amongst the most vulnerable groups of pupils**, including white working class boys and girls, those with English as an Additional Language, traveller children and asylum seekers / those newly arrived to the country. This has resulted in narrowing the gap between children of Caribbean heritage and white / Caribbean dual heritage children and their peers. *Further information is available in good practice story 17*
- Funded the **Virtual School for Children Looked After** provided support, guidance and challenge for this group of learners and their schools. This has resulted in Children Looked After by the Local Authority performing better than their peers nationally;
- Worked in partnership with local police to **monitor and prevent possible tensions in West Croydon related to Tamil gang violence**;
- Working in partnership with Job Centre Plus to organise a **job fair event aimed at young people in gangs**;
- Established a fully operational **multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH)** to keep children and young people safe;
- Completed an **audit on use of pupil premiums** by Croydon schools to close the gap between pupils on free school meals and other children;
- Established a **rapid response service** to reduce the number of indigenous young people coming into care;
- Established a **Joint SEN (Special Educational Needs) Board and Operational group** that meets regularly to review progress and develop collaborative work – including a shared approach to quality assurance for non-maintained / independent sector - and share information;
- Established an **SEN (Special Educational Needs) Reform Board** with wide representation from agencies and parents;
- Worked on a long list for 2014 **bulge classes** to address the demand for school places;
- Offered a **family learning course** in collaboration with Croydon Adult Learning and Training.

Good practice 14

Working in partnership to support young offenders

Croydon Triage Service

The Croydon 'triage' service aims to **reduce 'first time entrants' into the Criminal Justice System**. Clients include first time offenders and young people committing relatively low-level offences.

The triage service is delivered in a partnership framework by the Croydon Youth Offending Service (YOS) and the Metropolitan Police Service. The service works with young people aged 10-17 who have agreed to an assessment and a workshop rather than getting a criminal record. In order to avoid a criminal charge, young people are compelled to engage in sessions to address their offending behaviour and agree a support plan aimed at **diverting repeat offending**. As part of this agreement, all young people are expected to undertake **restorative work** in order to pay back to the community for the harm they have caused.

Young people who have committed shoplifting offences have attended sessions that are coordinated and run by Croydon BID (Business Improvement District) in conjunction with YOS officers, security staff from Centrale and Whitgift shopping centres and Croydon Police.

Croydon Business Improvement District (BID) set up the workshops to highlight the far-reaching consequences of shoplifting. These workshops offered young people the opportunity to learn about the impact of shoplifting crimes on businesses and the local economy. The young people are also expected to complete **community pay-back** through projects such as gardening, litter picking, and painting.

Croydon BID has worked in partnership with the YOS to identify projects within the town centre, particularly some of the trouble spot areas. This has contributed towards improving the look of the town centre area and strengthening community cohesion.

To date, approximately 35 young people have completed shoplifting groups, and 60 have undertaken community reparation. Young people who have attended the shoplifting group have found that it has helped them to avoid re-offending.

The importance of the project has been summed up by the Chief Executive of Croydon Bid;

"Far from being a victimless crime, shoplifting has significant consequences for the individual concerned and their employment prospects as well as on businesses, their employees and potentially, the local economy. It is important that we work with young people and educate them so they better understand the impact that their actions can have, while at the same time reinforcing the message that this sort of behaviour will not be tolerated in the town centre. The clear hope is that this will go a long way towards reducing the level of repeat offending among 10-17 years olds."

Good practice 15

Supporting young people in care

Supporting volunteer independent visitors to work with young people in care

Croydon's Independent Visitors Team recruited, trained and supported volunteers to **work one to one with young people in care (Looked After)** in the borough.

Independent visitors build a relationship with their young person and support them to have fun, share, learn and grow themselves. Independent visitors are part of a young person's life for two years and often more, being a constant presence and a source of change.

Volunteers are recruited through a full time volunteer co-ordinator who trains and gives ongoing support to volunteers. Independent visitors are also supported by professionals working with the young person such as social workers.

The key outcome of the initiative is that the Council has been able to offer young people in care **long term relationships**. The independent visitors have **worked with 40 young people in care** over 2014. Of those, **15 have been supported for over a year**.

The Council receives on-going feedback from independent visitors, young people and the professionals supporting them. The match is delivering enjoyment and is benefitting the young people we work with.

Croydon's children in care come from a wide variety of backgrounds and cultures. Half of the young people are asylum seekers and the other half are local to Croydon.

The independent visitors also come from varied backgrounds. The independent visitors **help young people** with visits to restaurants, cultural events and attending religious ceremonies. They also help with **integrating into** culture, developing English language skills and supporting independence skills. The scheme has also been successful in pairing local young people with independent visitors from the same background to help them **develop a positive** relationship.

Good Practice 16

Providing opportunities for people with learning disabilities to actively participate in the arts

Club Soda project

Established in 2009, Club Soda grew out of the Council's sustained approach to **delivering arts projects for and with people with learning disabilities**. The key aim of all Club Soda activity is to get more people with learning disabilities interested, involved and actively participating in the arts. The Council has given grants to support two of Club Soda's projects.

Club Soda's latest project, 'Soda Beat' aims to **give learning disabled musicians opportunities to perform live and be seen and heard by integrated audiences**. It was set up in response to the growing learning disability music scene in the UK and in particular to Club Soda's own music projects, including 'The Carbonators'. The project directly involves participants in the planning and development of live music events, providing a public platform for musicians with learning disabilities to perform.

Club Soda worked in partnership with Constant Flux to establish Soda Beat. Constant Flux is a community interest company that established The Rock House, a pioneering live music night run in Brighton whose sole purpose is "to provide as much stage time as possible" for learning disabled musicians.

Three Soda Beat events were delivered across the year, each featuring between 4 and 5 different bands or singer/songwriters, held in partnership with Stay Up Late, a national charity that promotes the rights of people with learning disabilities to live the lifestyle of their choosing.

All the events featured musicians with and without learning disabilities. Club Soda ensured that as a minimum 50% of all performing musicians had a learning disability. This resulted in truly **integrated events both in terms of performers and the audiences who came to the events**.

Please click on the link for a local press coverage of a Club soda night

<http://www.croydonadvertiser.co.uk/Club-night-people-learning-difficulties-taking/story-19953692-detail/story.html>

The project benefitted people with learning disabilities living locally and nationally. **The events brought people with and without learning disabilities together from across the country** (performers travelled from across London, the South East and as far as Birmingham), which gave some performers and the audience **a sense of "belonging" and "achievement"**. The project gave regular Club Soda participants a strong sense of ownership. Participants and members reported afterwards that they felt "included", "fantastic" and "buzzing".

Approximately 400 people with learning disabilities have attended or performed at Soda Beat since the project began and the feedback on the impact the project has on people with learning disabilities has been positive:

"It has given me more confidence after playing gigs; when you can hear the cheering it feels great. Writing our songs makes new adventures for us. "

"Watching someone who finds each day so difficult, play an instrument with such talent and ease, makes me feel warm and fuzzy inside. I think Club Soda might be made of magic."

"Soda Beat is exactly the sort of grass roots community activity which both I and the business like to support. Our entire team find the events and their guests a pleasure to work with"

Good Practice 17

Addressing underachievement amongst vulnerable groups

Downsview Primary School project

At Downsview Primary School, a group of White British, Year 4 and 5 boys were identified as underachieving in writing. A project was planned to deliver an effective intervention that would not only accelerate their progress, but would also ignite their levels of engagement.

The project set out to use a multi-faceted approach that combined role models, mentoring and a focussed writing project. Crystal Palace Football Club became partners in the intervention through their “Attainment through Mentoring” programme. The programme consisted of weekly ninety minute sessions with the literary lead and the football coach. Once the “Attainment through Mentoring” programme was finished, the sessions continued as a sixty minute weekly sessions.

The Literacy Lead planned and delivered the project. Prior to beginning the programme, the school held writing conferences with the pupils to understand their views and motivations with regard to writing and what they perceived to be the barriers. As a result of the writing conferences, the original focus for the sessions was changed to accommodate the pupils’ interests. This was an important part of the process as it promoted their engagement throughout the sessions.

In addition to this, the involvement of the football coach added to the pupils’ development of independence and self-efficacy skills. The tour of the ground and backstage areas of Crystal Palace Football Club worked as a hook to engage and enthuse the pupils. The coach from the club was a vital motivating factor with the pupils.

Allocating the best teachers to disadvantaged pupils has been shown to have a huge impact. This impact can be greater than the impact for other pupils.

Another feature of the programme was very clear aspirational target setting with the pupils. The pupils had a detailed session with the teacher examining features of writing from the next level up and what they need to include in their writing to achieve that. The levelling grids were shared with the pupils for use throughout their writing.

The coach from Crystal Palace Football Club started the sessions by writing his own story. He explained the process he undertook to write it. This was important in the mentoring of the pupils as it set the example that hard work is worth it. The sharing of his process was an inspiring part of the programme for the boys.

The mentoring offered by the coach from the football club was very important to the boys as it provided a role model and helped them to be aspirational. He also helped the pupils to make the link between learning in school and other areas. The feedback from the pupils was that they felt privileged to have been chosen to participate in the project. They often stopped the literacy lead in passing to comment on the sessions and to check when the next one would be.

The impact of the project has been noted by the pupils, parents and teachers. Some of their comments are noted below:

The pupils:

- “I learned a lot about writing stories and how to make my writing exciting.”

- “I made a lot of progress and learned how to write complex sentences.”

The parents:

- Have seen more motivation and enthusiasm when completing homework
- I can see a big improvement in their writing and anything that is going to do that is really good.

The teachers:

- Pupils are motivated to learn
- Impact on writing – they want to write – they want to do well now
- Combination of small group learning and whole class teaching has accelerated their learning

THEME 3 SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND HOUSING

The Council's equality priority is to work with our partners to:

- To improve health and wellbeing by reducing health inequalities.
- To improve health and social care by providing better care in later life.
- To improve support for vulnerable people by making it easier for them to have more choice and control over their lives.

The actions that the Council agreed to take to deliver this are:

- Reduce homelessness and the need for families to live in temporary accommodation especially those from a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) background.
- Enable more vulnerable people achieve independent living especially among those who are disabled and older people.
- Ensure more people with learning difficulties or mental health needs are placed in settled accommodation and employment.
- Ensure that more young offenders and drug users receive effective treatment to rehabilitate them so they can be in settled accommodation and employment.
- Support people in later life achieve independent living through rehabilitation or intermediate care.
- Provide effective advice, support and guidance about sexual health, contraception and dealing with pregnancy that maybe unwanted especially among young women from BME backgrounds.
- Narrow the gap in life expectancy between men and women and those living in deprived areas.
- Narrow the infant mortality gap among young women who are single parents from BME communities and living in deprived parts of the borough.
- Improve access to information, advice and guidance offered to vulnerable people so that they can exercise choice over their lives.
- Support people who choose to live independently receive self - directed support.
- Provide effective advice and guidance to support people quitting smoking especially those living in deprived parts of the borough.
- Increase the number of people over 65 who say they are treated with dignity and respect.
- Increase the up-take of flu vaccination among people who are vulnerable and older people.
- Increase the number of people who say they have received information and assistance needed to exercise their choice to live independently.

In 2014 we have:

- Undertaken a **service review for mental health commissioned supported housing services**. The key recommendation was a redesign of supported housing services. The newly designed service will provide an asset based pathway based on individual's needs and provide a community based crisis service which will work to prevent acute psychiatric relapse and hospital admission which can often result in the loss of accommodation and homelessness;
- Implemented **special service models around smoking cessation and tobacco control** for priority and marginalised groups. This includes new models for schools, pregnant women, people with severe mental health problems and those with long term conditions;
- **Increased the proportion of smoking quitters from target groups**. In the first 6 months of 2013-14 there were 37% of quitters, in first the 6 months of 2014-15 there were 55% of quitters. Target groups include populations with a high smoking prevalence and health inequality such as the unemployed, those from deprived wards, people with severe mental health problems, pregnant women, children and young people and people with smoking related long term conditions and particular health issues e.g. BMI great than 30;
- Assisted 693 people through the **Staying Put Scheme and Enhanced Staying Put Scheme**;
- Undertaken 70 adaptations through the **Disabled Facilities Grants**;
- Awarded 21 **home investment loans** and 6 **Home Repair Loans including energy loans**;
- Undertaken further review of the Alder proposal **to expand opportunities for independent living** for people placed into or living in residential care
- Run **"All Ages" community family safety challenge** in partnership with London Fire Brigade. The programme has been delivered to 31 local groups including young people in schools, youth clubs and family groups such as the New Addington Pathfinders;
- Delivered **training on substance misuse and gang awareness** in partnership with the police, Youth Offending Team and Safer London Foundation;
- Established a **Short Term Assessment Re-ablement Team (START)**. The purpose of the team is to improve the effectiveness of the existing reablement service and increase the number of people who will benefit from this service post-discharge. The team will work towards developing pathways to extend reablement services as part of admission avoidance and will consist of 2 social care discharge coordinators, a reablement coordinator and reablement workers;
- Established **Advice Services Croydon** - one of the first consortium services in the country to offer a **one-stop shop for advice, advocacy, self-help support and specialist information on a range of needs and disabilities**; *Further information is available in good practice story 20*
- Developed a **survey based on the 'Making it Real' statements (focused on how well personalisation is being achieved)**;
- Commenced an eight month **community outreach NHS Health Check service** pilot. The pilot aimed to provide **health checks in areas of high deprivation**. Target groups included BME (Black and Ethnic Minorities) communities;

- Delivered 2,305 **NHS Health Checks**. 951 people from BME communities have taken up the offer of health checks to date.

Good practice 18

Delivering social value through procurement

Achieving Social Value through Housing Repairs procurement

The Housing Responsive Repairs service is responsible for carrying out responsive repairs, general building works and voids reinstatement services as well as gas servicing and repairs, electrical works and general building works for over 16,000 residential properties owned by the Council.

Social value considerations were built in from the very beginning of the process with a question on social value included (and scored) in the pre-qualification questionnaire. Throughout the process it was decided to keep the questions regarding social value general and open in order to allow the sector to be creative.

The result was an offer from potential bidders that offered substantial tangible and inclusive social benefits for the diverse local community. The social value outcomes and benefits that the Council achieved through the contract include:

- **10 apprentices or more per annum**
- Extensive **work inspiration and work experience programmes** for NEETs and long-term unemployed
- **Careers advice** at local schools
- **Mentoring and developing Croydon-area SMEs** in partnership with Croydon Business Forum
- **Worked in partnership with local third sector organisations, a sports trust and youth project** to include hard-to-reach groups whilst boosting social enterprise
- **Volunteering** - supporting and **improving community projects** and **community facilities** for example refurbishment and community paint-outs on estates, de-cluttering the lounge area, providing storage cupboards and television and sound systems at sheltered housing schemes and **volunteering at local charities** for example delivering the accessible gardens project to seven of the sheltered housing schemes.
- Supported **local community engagement projects** for example delivering “getting started online” sessions - one of the contractors is currently in the process of developing a programme around using tablets, estate/fun days, job fairs and sheltered surgeries
- **DIY training** for local residents to maintain their homes better
- Training people and empowering to **identify individuals in fuel poverty**
- Work with local **food growing initiatives** to help local communities grow their own food
- Promote **environmental sustainability** amongst both young and older members of communities via family activities focussing on sustainability themes
- **Funding** and support for **charitable and community based projects** funding programs, **fundraising events** to improve the lives of local people
- Contribution to fund **local youth projects** and sport activities, **donating and supporting local school holiday clubs** and **donating and funding to support adventure based activities**
- Ten day **activity programme for disadvantaged young people in the Croydon area**
- Support to **anti-social behaviour community projects** that enable disadvantaged persons to have opportunities
- **Support literacy** through reading programmes at local primary school

Good Practice 19

Working towards the prevention of human trafficking

Human Trafficking

Prevention of human trafficking was established as a central coordination point for all issues relating to human trafficking and modern slavery in Croydon. A **sub-group** was established to coordinate policy and operational work streams and raise **practitioner and public awareness** around the issue of human trafficking / modern slavery.

The sub-group is hosted by Croydon Council with representatives from statutory and non-statutory organisations such as UK Visa's and Immigration (UKVI), Met Police, NHS, Croydon Community Against Trafficking (CCAT), Terrence Higgins Trust and Barnardo's.

The sub-group coordinates the multi-agency **awareness raising events** that are facilitated by the International Organisation for Migration. Awareness has been raised with practitioners about human trafficking for the purposes of fraud, which can sometimes result in forced marriage. Such forced marriage can lead to other forms of severe exploitation.

In the year 2013/14, Croydon Council made 10 child referrals and 4 adult referrals when dealing with suspected victims of trafficking. Human trafficking is a national and international crime and this was reflected in the variation of nationalities of the identified suspected victims.

With the Modern Slavery Bill making its way through Parliament at present, the sub-group is in the process of undertaking the necessary preparatory work prior to the implementation of this new legislation.

Modern slavery was the main topic on the agenda at a one-day conference organised by the council and a range of partners including the police, church groups, community organisations and NHS staff.

Participants discussed a range of topics including: developing an understanding of the scale and depth of modern slavery and its impact on the victim, recent developments in the fight against slavery locally, nationally and internationally and supporting victims of human trafficking and slavery.

Good Practice 20

Providing advice and support to adults and people living with disabilities

Advice Services Croydon

Four of Croydon's leading charities have pooled their resources and expertise to create the first fully integrated **advice and advocacy service for adults** in the borough who have social care and support needs, irrespective of their age or the nature of their disability.

Age UK Croydon, Croydon Hearing Resource Centre, Croydon Vision and Disability Croydon spent nine months developing the new Advice Services Croydon (ASC) which is one of the first in the country to offer **a one-stop shop for advice, advocacy, self-help support and specialist information on a range of needs and disabilities**. The service will be delivered through an initial three year contract with Croydon Council.

The service aims to provide **practical support and advice to help people to maintain their independence and improve their quality of life**. Its services will be accessible via a helpline, email, appointments, drop-in sessions and surgeries around the borough. A comprehensive directory of advice and information will also be available online.

A launch event was held with attendance by the Mayor of Croydon and representatives from local service providers and voluntary groups and Croydon residents.

Good Practice 21

Addressing Health Inequalities

Addressing Health Inequalities

Addressing health inequalities is the very basis of public health, which operates from the understanding that the main factors that influence health are income, employment and housing – all those factors associated with deprivation. People from the most affluent groups in society enjoy longer, healthier lives than those in the more deprived groups.

New Addington and Fieldway are two of the most deprived wards in the Borough. Communities in New Addington and Fieldway have been working towards tackling health issues. This has been achieved via a range of projects that have supported local people to **address economic inequality** including:

- the **job club** - the job club is based at the Octagon on Central Parade and allows those looking for work to come together regularly and support each other through the job seeking process. Run by volunteers, the job club aims to build the confidence and self-esteem of those who are unemployed and searching for work;
- the **welfare rights team** - the team offers various advice services to help ensure that residents claim all their entitlements particularly disability/carers benefits, in work benefits such as tax credits, and ensure that residents get advice and support with housing benefit or other housing costs;
- the Vine **food bank** - The Vine aims to be more than a food bank. It signposts families and individuals to other programs and agencies that can offer further help with employment, managing finances for example.

There have also been a range of projects and programmes that were representative of the local area and, in particular, had regard for protected characteristics such as age, gender, ethnicity and disability. Some examples are listed below:

- **Mum 2 mum peer support programme** – a programme aims to give mothers the support, information and encouragement they need both to start and continue breastfeeding their babies;
- an **Over 50s social club** - The 50+ social club provides a social setting for over 50s residing in New Addington and Fieldway;
- the Fieldway Family Centre- offers a range of high quality family support services;
- Addington Heights **Reablement Centre** – a reablement day centre that provides a range of facilities centred on supporting clients with access to a range of reablement opportunities, to assist clients regain skills, help with daily living, reduce isolation, maintain wellbeing and independence and signpost or assist with access to local community resources;
- Kingfishers Association - a long established group in New Addington for people with mental health issues;
- **Healthy lifestyles** – programmes and projects that focus on healthy eating, healthy weight, quitting smoking, physical activity and sexual health.

Good Practice 22

Working to increase HIV testing in the community

Increasing uptake of HIV Testing in people who are most at risk

Public Health Croydon is working towards **increasing, and normalising, the uptake of HIV testing** in order to reduce late diagnosis and thereby reduce resultant ill health in populations most affected by HIV.

The most at risk populations are men who have sex with men and African people (MARP). These two groups make up the bulk of those most affected by HIV at a local, London and national level.

Public Health Croydon undertook **outreach within the community**. This consisted of talks around HIV testing that covers areas such as the need for and advantages of early diagnosis especially for specific groups such as pregnant women and free treatment for all irrespective of immigration status.

African people are one of the two most at risk populations of HIV infection both nationally, regionally and locally. They make up a very big number of those who are diagnosed late. There is still a lot of fear, denial and stigma around HIV. In order to address this, the Council has delivered some targeted talks at this group.

The **talks were holistic and covered health issues more prominent to these communities such as diabetes and stroke** and were delivered in partnership with Diabetes UK and the Stroke Association.

The talks were delivered at a local African churches. The church leaders included HIV in their teachings and encouraged individuals to get tested. The Council commissioned Terrence Higgins Trust to undertake the testing. The church leaders also took the test which set a good example. A total of 29 people, an average of about 10 per Church took the test following talks.

During national HIV testing week, a total of 420 people (majority of these Black African and Black Caribbean) tested for HIV on the mobile bus which went around Croydon over 12 days from 21st Nov to 2nd Dec . Apart from North End, the bus was in New Addington, South Norwood, Selhurst and Thornton Heath, all areas of high deprivation but also with dense populations of African people. This was a big improvement on last year where 300 tested.

These interventions have led to an **increasing number of African people taking the HIV test**. Testing in the community helps to normalise HIV testing and reduce the stigma and fear around HIV.

Quote from one of the Church leaders:

“Thank you for the education sessions at our event in June. Even though, time was a constraint on the day the audience found the information very relevant and useful. I had a few people comment on the information on Stroke and how much they didn't know and learnt that day! “

THEME 4

WORKFORCE

The Council's equality priority is to work with our partners to:

- To encourage a modern and diverse workforce by increasing the proportion of staff who say they are valued and treated fairly

The actions that the Council agreed to take to deliver this are:

- Ensure that our diverse workforce represents the borough's population
- Ensure that staff from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, women and disabled people are represented in the top 5% of the workforce
- Work to reduce pay gaps between women and men at different levels of the organisation as well as between those from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds
- Work towards making sure that more staff say the organisation values diversity, their contribution is valued and they are treated with fairness and respect.

In 2014 we have:

- Developed a **leadership programme** for all staff that will be launched early 2015;
- Established **staff networks** that will report into People Board to ensure corporate support/governance; *Further information is available in good practice story 22.*
- Launched two new **e-learning modules** to help staff at Croydon improve their knowledge, understanding and confidence about diversity;
- Undertaken internal and external research to help define the needs of women's and BME staff network. The research also aimed to assess how the organisation might provide leadership development support to these groups;
- Organised workshops to provide space and opportunity for staff networks to form;
- Undertaken detailed analysis of the divisional **workforce profile** and gained approval for key actions to address areas for underrepresentation of groups identified through the people strategy and departmental people plans;
- Worked on collating the 2014 workforce profile. This will be published in January 2015.

Good Practice 23 Establishing staff diversity network groups

Staff Network Groups

The Council recognises that when people feel safe being themselves at work, they're more creative, are happier and stay motivated. A range of new staff network groups were launched to bring staff together in order to have honest and open conversations and share their experiences which are vital to improving our diversity within the organisation.

Each network group is being sponsored by a senior management team member. A launch event and a series of informal and formal focus group sessions have been held. The feedback survey for the launch event (in which over 60 people attended) identified that over 90% of attendees believed that networks can help change the Council and wanted to be active participants of network groups

It is hoped that the network groups will reflect diversity within the workforce and encourage staff to take part in activities and raise the profile of particular groups such as: LGBT, disability, carers, mental health and BME groups.

Good Practice 24 Campaign to capture diversity information

“What’s it got to do with you” campaign

The disclosure of diversity information enables the organisation to have a complete picture of the make-up of its workforce. The information will contribute the development of a People Strategy for 2015-18 that responds directly staff needs in the most effective ways.

Following the launch of One Oracle - enterprise resource planning (ERP) software, all staff in the organisation were invited to **review and update their diversity information**.

A leaflet “What’s it got to do with you?” was produced to launch the campaign. Early indications have seen an **increase in disclosure of traditionally ‘low’ disclosure** sections (compared to April 2014):

- Sexual Orientation- there has been an 8.28% increase in people completing this field
- Disability – there has been an increase of 1.51% completion completing this field
- Religion – there has been a 21.36% increase in completion of this field.

Staff feedback has very positive. A member of staff responding to the Pulse Survey, stated:

“I am happy for the Council to capture whatever information it requires to paint an accurate picture of what it is like to work for Croydon and also inform future changes.”

Good Practice 25

Becoming a London Living Wage Council

London Living Wage

As Croydon's largest employer, the Council is taking a lead on **securing fair pay** across the borough by committing itself to supporting the '**London Living Wage**'.

This means every Council employee will be paid a minimum rate of £8.80 per hour, or £16,518 for a 36 hour week. This is £2.49 per hour more than the National Minimum Wage and is calculated as the amount people need to **cover the basic costs of living**.

Wherever possible, the Council will make it a requirement of its contractors that their staff are paid at least the living wage. Negotiations will take place with existing firms who deliver services on behalf of the Council and in future any new arrangements will have the **living wage principle built into contract terms**. Community schools have also been encouraged to sign up to the scheme.

The London Living Wage is a voluntary initiative and means workers get substantially more than the legal minimum of £6.31 which also only applies to people over 21.

The Council aims to **achieve accredited London Living Wage status** once the plans have been implemented.

Appendix 1 Equality Analysis Programme 2014-15

Equality Analysis Programme 2014-2015

The Council annual equality analysis programme is integrated into its policy, performance and decision-making frameworks. The programme is monitored and reviewed by the Communities and Equality Board that reports to the Council's Leadership Team.

The current annual equality analysis programme had 52 planned assessments. At the end of the second financial quarter the performance of the published programme was:

- 0 equality analyses have been rated red
- 9 equality analyses have been rated amber
- 43 equality analyses have been rated green

Department	RAG STATUS				
	RED	AMBER	GREEN	Blank	Total
CED	0	1	13	0	14
CFL	0	4	8	0	12
DASHH	0	3	12	0	15
D&E	0	1	10	0	11
Total	0	9	43	0	52
%	0	17	83	0	

The table contains a list of the equality analysis completed so far in 2014 – 15:

STRATEGY, POLICY OR FUNCTION	DEPARTMENT
HR Restructure	CED
SEN Programme	CFL
School Music Service	CFL
Plans for an education mutual	CFL
Local Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report	CFL
Play Streets	CFL
Reablement & Hospital Discharge Programme (refresh EA)	DASHH
Annual Report of the Croydon Safeguarding Adults Board	DASHH
Annual Public Health Report	DASHH
Housing delivery plan 2013-18	D&E
Community Safety Strategy	D&E
Highways	D&E
Environmental Enforcement Policy	D&E
Flood Prevention and Winter Preparations	D&E

Appendix 2 Equality performance information

The Council collects equality information and monitors performance on a range of indicators that relate to its equality objectives. Each year we aim to publish our performance against a selected range of indicators. In 2014-15 we are monitoring performance on the indicators listed below.

	STRATEGY, POLICY OR FUNCTION
1	Racist and religious crime
2	Domestic violence
3	Serious youth violence
4	Economic activity (working age residents 16-64 yrs.)
5	Key out of work benefit claimant rate
6	JSA Claimant Rate
7	Low birth weight
8	Childhood obesity gap between boys and girls and those from Black and Minority Ethnic Backgrounds
9	Free School Meals – eligible and claiming
10	KS4 attainment gap for children from BME backgrounds
11	KS4 attainment gap for children with SEN
12	KS4 attainment gap for looked after children
13	KS4 attainment gap for children in receipt of FSM
14	The percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training
15	Improve life expectancy
16	Smoking quitters
17	Achieving independence for older people and vulnerable adults
18	Social care clients receiving self-directed support
19	Timeliness of social care assessments
20	Settled accommodation for people with learning difficulties
21	Homelessness and temporary accommodation
22	PDCS rating
23	Employee formal complaints
24	Employees subject to disciplinary hearing or investigation

Appendix 3

Additional sources for information on equality and inclusion in Croydon

- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and associated deep dive chapters
- A Public Health Annual Report
<http://www.croydon.gov.uk/contents/departments/healthsocial/pdf/1295152/annual-ph-report>
- Equality Analysis documents published on the Council's external internet page
<http://www.croydon.gov.uk/community/equality/eqias/>
- The Equality Strategy
<http://www.croydon.gov.uk/contents/departments/community/pdf/Eq1216>
- Equality Action Plan 2013 -15
<http://www.croydon.gov.uk/contents/departments/community/pdf/corporate-eqiaplan.pdf>