

CROYDON COUNCIL

EQUALITY ANNUAL REPORT 2018

“A stronger, fairer borough where no community is held back”

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Foreword – Cabinet Member for Safer Croydon and Communities

As the portfolio holder for the Safer Croydon and Communities agenda, I am pleased to introduce the progress report on the Council's Opportunity and Fairness Plan 2016-2020, which sets out the Council's equality objectives and latest analysis and action on the Council's workforce profile and gender pay gap.

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

This administration wants Croydon to be a stronger, fairer borough where no community is held back. We want the Council to reflect the diversity of the Borough, and focus on embedding equality and inclusion in all that we do as well as providing community leadership to encourage and support our partners in Croydon to share this ambition.

Croydon's Corporate Plan 2018-2022 outlines the Borough's key priorities for the next four years, and how we will continue to eradicate inequalities and ensure that Croydon is a place where all have the opportunity to live, work and flourish. One of the Corporate Plan's outcomes is to abolish inequality in Croydon and work towards a place where all have an equal opportunity to prosper.

This progress report sets out some significant steps the Council has taken over the past year to embed equality and inclusion throughout the organisation. It highlights the Council's achievements in relation to our equalities performance indicators, and sets out examples through a series of case studies that describe the different ways the council is seeking to ensure that our services are fair, inclusive and accessible to our residents. The majority of the case studies support achievements across the range of the equality objectives we set for 2016/20.

Although many challenges remain locally and nationally to achieve our ambitions there are significant achievements including:

- ✓ Continued support to the independent Opportunity and Fairness Commission towards the delivery of its recommendations and objectives.
- ✓ Promoting equality of access to education and jobs through the development of programmes tailored to the needs of under-represented communities.
- ✓ Ensure employment opportunities for disabled people transitioning into employment, or who may need more supportive work environments.
- ✓ Continuing to work with young people to tackle the issues that matter most to them, raising aspiration and opportunities through the Choose Your Future campaign and the Youth Congress.
- ✓ Establishing the Young Mayor to increase young people's participation within the borough.
- ✓ Developing more apprenticeship programmes dedicated to meeting the needs of Croydon's young people.
- ✓ Work with schools to help them support students with additional needs and keep those students in mainstream education.
- ✓ Increasing the availability of parenting training and support services for single parent families.
- ✓ Work to reduce digital exclusion in the borough.

- ✓ Establishment of the One Croydon Alliance in order to integrate provision of hospital, primary care, mental health and social services for those aged 65+ and extending that to all ages.
- ✓ Tackling isolation through better access to services and facilities for all parts of the borough, particularly the most disadvantaged areas.
- ✓ Continuing to work to reduce ill-health, including promoting mental health and reducing inequalities in health care.
- ✓ Ensuring that prevention services are delivered in locations around the borough, where those who need them most can have easy access.
- ✓ Celebrating Croydon's diversity and heritage through supporting annual events such as Croydon Mela and PrideFest.

The performance in key areas and good practice stories provide evidence that we have made progress in our journey towards achieving excellence for our equality and inclusion practices. This progress has also been recognised through the Council winning three awards at the *Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (enei)* in 2018. These included Overall winner – Public Sector, Apprenticeships Award, Mental Health and Wellbeing and being Highly Commended for the Employee Network Group of the Year.

We are not complacent and recognise that there are still many inequality and fairness challenges in the borough that we need to focus on by working in collaboration with our partners.

Over the next year, we are preparing for the Equalities Framework for Local Government (EFLG) accreditation. Undertaking the assessment will help us review and improve our performance for people with protected characteristics, make improvements to and deliver better equality outcomes for staff, residents and service users, and meet our Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

I look forward to sharing the improvements that we make in 2019/20 with you in our next progress report.

Introduction

The Equality Policy and supporting Opportunity and Fairness Plan 2016/20 set out the Council's statutory equality objectives in line with the regulatory duties under the Equality Act 2010.

In setting the equality objectives for 2016/20 an evidence base was drawn upon from the Croydon Opportunity and Fairness Commission final report, the Borough profile 2015 and Index of Multiple deprivation which highlighted the following objectives:

- ✓ To increase the rate of employment for disabled people, young people, over 50s and lone parents, who are furthest away from the job market.
- ✓ To reduce the rate of child poverty especially in the six most deprived wards.
- ✓ To improve attainment levels for White working class and Black Caribbean heritages, those in receipt of Free School Meals and Looked after Children, particularly at Key Stage 2 including those living in six most deprived wards.
- ✓ To increase the percentage of domestic violence sanctions.
- ✓ To increase the reporting and detection of child sexual offences monitored.
- ✓ To reduce the number of young people who enter the youth justice system.
- ✓ To reduce social isolation amongst disabled and older people.
- ✓ To improve the proportion of people from different backgrounds who get on well together.
- ✓ To reduce differences in life expectancy between communities.

Key performance indicators to measure the progress were developed for each objective and embedded within the Council's Corporate performance framework, these have been reported on a bi-annual basis to Cabinet since September 2016.

Each section of the report sets out the current equality and inclusion priorities (listed above) and a summary of the performance key activities and projects that the Council has focused on over the last year to deliver them.

It also contains good practice stories that provide an overview of how the Council has worked in partnership with our statutory, voluntary and community partners, and engaged with our residents to deliver equality initiatives that support work on improving service outcomes for diverse communities in the borough.

Next Steps

The Council will continue to monitor progress against the Equality Objectives set out in the Opportunity and Fairness Plan 2016/20 through the Council's Corporate Performance Framework and will report annually on overall progress.

THEME 1**EMPLOYMENT****A TOWN CENTRE THAT LIFTS THE WHOLE BOROUGH****EQUALITY OBJECTIVE**

To increase the rate of employment for disabled people, young people, over 50s and lone parents who are furthest away from the job market.

Why we chose this equality objective?

Despite falling unemployment the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) showed there were still challenges around the proportion of working age population excluded from the labour market, especially those aged 18 – 24, over 50, and those who would like to work but are unable to do so due to sickness, disability and/or caring responsibilities. The Opportunity and Fairness Commission found that many disabled people, those who had long-term health conditions, or with mental health concerns, want to work but struggle to gain employment.

Residents told the Opportunity and Fairness Commission that they would like to see local employers doing more to recruit disabled people, and those from BME backgrounds. The Commission also found that female workers wanted better support with childcare and caring responsibilities to access the job market. In addition the Commission highlighted that workers needed to be paid the London Living Wage (LLW).

What has happened?

The percentage of people employed within the borough and the percentage of 18-24 years not in employment, education and training the Borough continues to perform better than London and England. The numbers of Job Seekers Allowance claimants aged between 60-64 years within the Borough continues to see reductions in the six most deprived wards. The performance demonstrates the focus on getting people into jobs and the continuing success of the Croydon Works programme.

There are still challenges in relation the level of skills and qualification in the borough to maximise the opportunities within the job market. Through the Croydon Works programme and Good Employer Charter the Council continues to focus on ensuring that all Croydon residents have access to good quality employment opportunities whether that is through education, training or support for job readiness. This includes making our Council a London Living Wage Council, with payment of the LLW as a basic requirement in new council contracts and working towards ensuring the town centre is developed as a London Living Wage commercial and shopping zone, promoting the payment of the London Living Wage. In addition there is a focus on extending the Croydon Good Employer Charter with business champions and asking our business community to: Pay Fair, Employ Croydon, Buy Croydon and Be Better for Croydon.

The key actions that the Council has taken to deliver this outcome include:

- ✓ **Promoting equality of access to education and jobs through the development of programmes tailored to the needs of under-represented communities.**
- ✓ **Ensure employment opportunities for disabled people transitioning into employment or who may need more supportive work environments.**

- ✓ **Developing more apprenticeship programmes dedicated to meeting the needs of Croydon's young people.**
- ✓ **Increasing the availability of parenting training and support services for single parent families.**

The case studies below highlight the work supporting this theme.

Employer of Choice Programme

As an apprenticeship levy paying employer, the Council recognised the need to design meaningful progression pathways into Croydon Council, and creating jobs that attract and provide jobs for local people.

Through the Employer of Choice Programme, the Council aims to;

- Become an employer of choice for local residents.
- Upskill and take on new staff.
- Develop progression pathways.
- Respond to the workforce challenges in relation to an ageing local government workforce, and particular professions it is hard to recruit and retain, for example procurement, planning, health and social care

The programme provides a range of employment pathways into the Council, including apprenticeships, work experience, traineeships and internships. Some of its ambitions include;

- Targeting certain groups within the Croydon population who would benefit from apprenticeships within the local authority, for example young people, individuals from BME backgrounds, people with disabilities.
- Blended learning, with development of skills and pastoral care.
- Providing buddies and mentors.

The programme is made up of activities, events and training to help our apprentices grow. It offers a range of opportunities and qualifications to help participants gain skills and knowledge they need. Participants can earn while they learn and get paid a competitive salary. All training provided is free. Find some examples of these below;

Cultural Internships

Apprentices are given the opportunity to gain paid work experience with both internationally acclaimed and local arts organisations. Placements are available with UK's leading black theatre company, Talawa; Croydon's world-class chamber orchestra, the London Mozart Players (LMP); the world-famous BRIT school; fashion company FMM Pop Up who have just moved to Croydon from Camden; and our very own Croydon Music and Arts.

The cultural internships project has been developed by the council and supported by Croydon Partnership, the joint venture between Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield and Hammerson.

The programme was named 'Apprenticeship Employer of the Year' at the Personnel Today Awards - a ceremony that celebrates the success of the best of HR in both the private and public sector. This achievement follows on from previous success at the enei (Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion) Awards earlier in 2018.

The scheme is in its second year and third wave - having successfully increased employment opportunities for people across the borough - welcoming young people from underrepresented groups with little or no work experience.

It's the result of innovative recruitment practices such as utilising social media platforms, simplifying the application process, and providing group assessment days to allow candidates, who may struggle with a formal interview, to demonstrate their strengths. Staff tasked with recruiting were also told to look at the potential of those applying as opposed to experience, which is recognised as an example of good practice by the Learning and Work Institute.

Our apprentices, who are ambassadors for the council, speak in schools to students and young people to further break down socio-economic barriers. They are the face of our Choose Your Future campaign - supporting young people to make positive choices and give them access to opportunities.

More young Croydon residents and school leavers have had an opportunity to develop experience and gain a relevant qualification that they would not have had without the scheme.

Since its launch in 2017, the scheme has recruited 36 new apprentices. In addition to the work experience opportunities, Croydon also created more than 20 short work placement opportunities, and are in the process of pulling together and streamlining internships available at the council. Four externally recruited apprentices have moved up to the next level of their apprenticeship within the council. Two more have been offered opportunities to progress to the next level and four more have achieved employment within the council after or before their apprenticeship was completed, including a 17 year old.

"Before working in the council I was a manager in a milkshake shop. There was no way I would have been able to make the transition into local government that quickly without doing an apprenticeship. It allowed me to change my skill-set, get a foot in the door and figure out what direction I wanted to go in."

I secured a role as a full-time housing officer after my apprenticeship and after that I applied for a role in the SNAP (Supported Needs Assessment and Placement) team working in supported housing. I now specialise in working with offenders and am based at the probation offices twice a week. Looking back, I am proud of my career progression. I have recently completed a leadership programme and in the future I will be looking at managerial roles."

Leonie Thomas - former apprentice

"Young people want the opportunity to learn, work and get paid. Employers want to take on young people, but they also expect them to have the relevant experience, by being the organisation to take on apprentices you give them the ability to gain the experience that they need to progress."

I have been working with the 14-19 team for approximately 3 months, during which I have had an active part in the production of the post 16 prospectus. I was once a student receiving the prospectus and I am now helping to create something that will be beneficial to current students."

Supported Employment for Disabled residents

The Council's Supported Employment Team won a BASE (British Association for Supported Employment) Innovation Award for the work they have undertaken to support residents with disabilities into employment. This is illustrated by a number of projects that have produced employment outcomes or provided the necessary training, to enable disabled residents to be more job ready and follow their aspirations. You can find further information about some of the projects below;

All About Me Shop

All About Me is a boutique shop staffed by Croydon residents' with disabilities working towards a career in retail. Residents are given the opportunity to participate in a four-week employability programme to help local residents with disabilities gain experience of working in a shop and gain a City & Guilds level 1 retail qualification at the same time.

The Gateway service works to support and train both people at risk of homelessness and adults with disabilities so they have greater confidence in the workplace, financial stability and independence. Disabled residents are also given the opportunity to volunteer in the shop, thereby also gaining retail experience for their CVs.

Shop stock is produced by local artisans, local residents with disabilities and pupils from Bensham School (a school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties and autism). This helps them showcase their talents and gives them opportunities and the confidence to take their talents forward. Support came from the community - The BRIT School, local colleges, special schools who provided items, and Social Enterprises such as Solid Wood who provided their support and furniture.

The All About Me Shop is a proof of concept pilot, with the aim to make this a full time project that provides residents with opportunities to gain valuable work experience underpinned with a qualification, and engage with employers to turn the work experience into paid work. This can be further extended to include care leavers, long term unemployed, homeless residents and work experience students. The project also aims to support residents that make clothing, furniture, bags and other products to sell their stock in the All About Me shop.

One of the people on the course is Chris Meliniotis, aged 58 from Kenley, whose past jobs have ranged from sweet shop assistant to warehouse foreman and dry cleaner. He has been unemployed for 12 years after being turned down for hundreds of jobs.

Chris said: "I have had interviews and it all goes well but once I've mentioned my disability they never phone me back to say whether I've got the job, and it is upsetting. The only retail experience I haven't got is with modern tills where people pay with cards. I hope I get the qualification because that brings me closer to getting a job."

Reverse Job Fairs

An innovative approach was taken to the format of a Jobs Fair for people with disabilities. Instead of potential candidates approaching employers to look for work, the process was turned on its head with employers, seeking to recruit and approaching candidates. The event was deliberately kept informal and a relaxed atmosphere maintained.

60 residents with disabilities showcased their skills by running stalls where local employers were given the opportunity to approach them to discuss vacancies currently available. The event was targeting 40 residents but due to popularity 60 residents attended. Three reverse job fairs have taken place to date. This has led to 10 disabled residents gaining employment and 15 starting work placements/work courses.

Supported internship programme

The Council hosted a supported internship programme in 2017/18, which gave eight talented residents a work opportunity. These eight interns have grown in confidence, developed new skills and made new friends and work colleagues. A second cohort was run from September 2018. Five out of the eight interns have secured paid job opportunities, one is taking part in the second cohort, and two will secure volunteering opportunities.

Croydon Council

Croydon Council has worked with the Department for Work and Pensions, local partners and employers over the past three years to encourage employers to become more confident in recruiting and retaining someone with a disability.

Croydon Council were awarded Disability Confident Employer status in October 2016 (Level 2) and is working towards becoming a Leader Employer. (Level 3).

Delivering Employability Skills and Parent Aspirations

Croydon's Best Start model brings together key services including health visiting, children's centres, early years and the voluntary sector into an integrated service model to ensure young children get the best start in life.

The service supports parents/carers with children aged under five years to overcome barriers to employment, with a particular focus on those parents/carers who are out of work or lack confidence and, the skills needed to look and apply for work. It delivers a package of services which ensure overall progression and pathways to work and concentrate on:

- supporting parents/carers to understand and maximise their family budgets and benefits take up;
- delivering an innovative program that helps parents/carers to break down main barriers to employment and,
- providing support and brokerage services for parents/carers to access volunteering and work experience opportunities.

Employability skills for parents have been delivered in collaboration with Croydon Children's centres and Croydon libraries. Children's centres provide the crèche facilities in order for parents to attend the employability sessions/workshops, thereby reducing the barrier to learning for many parents of young children. The training is tailored to the needs of individual parents and includes beauty and jewellery workshops, budgeting skills and CV/interview skills, working closely with several partners under the Best Start contract for both delivering and signposting services, this includes working with local charities/voluntary/community sector. Through strong relationships developed with the library services in the borough, the contractor has secured space to deliver computer skills workshops to local parents, through a digital zone, enhancing the original contract and supporting parents further.

Below are quotes from participants who attended the digital skills course;

"The tutor is the most fantastic lady I ever met. Great information about everything I want to know regarding digital skills."

"Very interesting course. I gained a lot of knowledge on job searching and employment. I have become more confident using the web."

"This course was very relevant and helpful. Actually, was more than what I expected from the course. Lots of information about services and support for parents in Croydon. And wise advice about how to search and work on career path and job search. Thank you, this course is very helpful and enlightening as to what is available."

THEME 2 **CHILD POVERTY**
LEAVING NO CHILD BEHIND

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE

To reduce the rate of child poverty especially in the six most deprived wards.

Why did we chose this equality objective?

Child poverty varies significantly across the Borough. Although the overall proportion of children in poverty had fallen, the areas with the highest rates of child poverty had remained the same namely: New Addington, Fieldway, Broad Green, Selhurst and Thornton Heath. Almost four times as many children live in poverty in Fieldway (30%) than Sanderstead (8%).

Welfare reforms had further compounded the situation for many of those who already find it difficult to make ends meet. The Opportunity and Fairness Commission found food banks around the borough were struggling to cope with the increase in demand from people who were in need. At a time when money is tight many people got into debt and turned to payday loans or hire purchase. Citizen Advice in Croydon told the Commission that after benefits, tax credit and housing issues, debt represented their third biggest case load.

Tackling the socio-economic determinants of health such as jobs, homes, social cohesion, education and income are key to reducing the inequalities in early years that become the inequalities in health and life chances.

What has happened?

Nationally there has been an upward trend in child poverty over the last three years with the impact of welfare reform and benefit freezes challenging the ability to combat child poverty locally. Families on the margins of poverty are often dependent on in-work and out-of-work benefits. Changes in the benefits system have a significant impact on child poverty rates which can hide the impact of local initiatives.

The Council has collaborated with a range of partners to undertake a number of initiatives and approaches which have contributed towards combating the impact of child poverty. The key actions include:

- ✓ **Working towards becoming a flexible working borough, and increasing the number and range of flexible working opportunities.**
- ✓ **Continued delivery of the Best Start Programme, a multi-agency model for improving universal and early intervention services from pregnancy until the child reaches five years old.**
- ✓ **Exploring new models of childcare that offer parents and carers appropriate affordable places.**
- ✓ **Supported Community Connect Alliance, a community hub that helps residents achieve financial stability by balancing their income, budget and housing costs.**

The case study below highlights the work supporting this theme.



Community Connect

Community Connect was set up and co-designed with partners from across the voluntary, community, faith, private and statutory sectors.

The Council recognised the need to change the way it supports residents in order to respond to wider vulnerabilities and issues in particular localities; it needed to go above and beyond to effectively prevent residents from experiencing crisis and homelessness and launched Community Connect in January 2017.

Based at the Family Centre in Fieldway, Community Connect is a multi-agency ('Alliance'), community hub model that is based in the community. Membership conditions are prioritised to residents who may be at a time of crisis, in need of budget management, training, employment and housing support. This element of 'need' is assessed and typical members are families with children who are affected by the welfare reform changes, those unemployed or at risk of homelessness, food and fuel poverty. There have been a number of positive outcomes whereby tenancies have been sustained, employment has been secured and incomes have been maximised therefore alleviating the risk of child poverty within these families.

We identify households most at risk of homelessness and help residents gain clarity of their circumstances and what they can realistically do to improve their situations. As one resident explained "It's the choice between paying the rent and buying food". It is not acceptable that any of our residents have to make these kind of choices.

By working in an innovative way with residents in their own community we are identifying opportunities to make an impact earlier and tackling the issues more quickly to prevent escalation as well as reducing the demand for more costly statutory services in the future.

Community Connect outcomes:

- 21 long-term unemployed residents into work,
- 22 residents supported into education,
- 5.27 tonnes of surplus food provided, helping families save a combined £37,042.50 on their food shopping bills
- Addressing poverty – the Food Stop reached its target number of members (100) within just weeks of its launch
- Encouraging social value e.g. Food Stop shop fit-out (Mulalley); food donations (Tesco); volunteers (Croydon Council)

In addition, Community Connect is providing inspiration for others in the sector who are using this approach as best practice in their own schemes.

Community Connect/Food Stop Film

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CA-W90H1m_4&feature=youtu.be

Due to its success we are rolling out Community Connect/Food Stop to other parts of the borough so even more residents can benefit. Community Connect/Food Stop Thornton Heath will be launching in early 2019.

Case Study – Resident - <https://youtu.be/abpVXQDTInU>

THEME 3 ATTAINMENT

LEAVING NO CHILD BEHIND

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE

To improve attainment levels for white working class and Black Caribbean heritages, those in receipt of Free School Meals and Looked after Children, particularly at Key Stage 2 including those living in the six most deprived wards.

Why did we chose this equality objective?

Croydon's borough profile (2015/16) highlighted that the proportion of children achieving a good level of development by age 5 was lower than the national average across England and significantly lower for children from poorer backgrounds. Poor levels of literacy and language among a family can have a detrimental impact on early learning and development that result in greater exclusion later on in life.

Despite improved attainment among children and young people in Croydon, gaps remained difficult to close for BME (Black Minority Ethnic) children, disabled children with special educational needs and those receiving free school meals, especially those who were carers and living in the most deprived wards in the north and in New Addington and Fieldway. In addition, children who are looked after in care, especially unaccompanied asylum seeking children, of which Croydon has the largest number of any London Borough, experienced significant difficulties including trauma and mental health issues. For unaccompanied asylum seeking children there are also often cultural and language barriers.

What has happened?

In 2016/17 the Borough schools continued to perform at or above the national and London average in key attainment areas, including the early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2. At Key Stage 4 pupils in Croydon secondary schools continue to make better than average progress. These achievements have been mirrored in performance above the national average in educational attainment for children with SEND (Special Educational Needs), Black Caribbean children, White Working class children and children in receipt of free school meals.

Although outcomes for Croydon Looked After Children who have been in continuous care for 12 months or more are lower than for all pupils, data for 2016/17 shows that they attain in line with their peers nationally. This is an improved picture from the previous academic year we are starting to close the attainment gap for Looked After Children and are working hard to improve this further. At the end of key stage 4, 48% of Looked After Children achieved a combined English and mathematics GCSE pass at Grade 4 or above. A large percentage of this cohort are UASC (Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children), many of whom have little previous education experience or provision in place when they enter the care system. These learners go on to make considerable progress, achieving at a level appropriate to their starting point and are successfully supported into suitable courses post 16. The successes enjoyed by our post 16 learners are testament to this and a result of the heavy investment made into this area of work.

The key actions that the Council has taken to deliver this outcome are:

- ✓ **Continuing to ensure there are school places for all our children and young people**
- ✓ **Work with schools to help them support students with additional needs and keep those students in mainstream education**
- ✓ **Working with schools to avoid permanent exclusions**
- ✓ **Supported the creation of a new school in New Addington, which will provide places for children with special needs between the ages of 4 and 16**
- ✓ **Provided 56 additional places for children with special educational needs**

The case study below highlights the work supporting this theme.

Virtual School

The virtual school service provides advice and support to children and young people aged 3-19 years who are Looked After. From the time a child comes in to the care system, we actively work to put strategies in place and start the support process of the child.

The Virtual School (previously the Looked after Children Education Service) is a core service within the Council's Children and Young People's Service.

It has a tiered delivery model for Children Looked After:

Level 1 - monitoring individual attainment, attendance, Special Educational Needs (SEN), exclusions and leading on Personal Education Plans (PEPs).

Level 2 - individual casework including negotiation and advocacy, attendance at multi-agency meetings, assessments.

Level 3 - individual direct work with young people through interventions in school and off site for learning (underachievement), behaviour and attendance issues.

This is particularly beneficial for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC) as they can be taken into the provision whilst a school is found for them.

Children from Years 7 to Year 11 can attend the provision from any local authority however the priority would be for our Croydon Looked After Children.

Virtual School offers a range of subjects, namely; English, Maths, Music, Art, Cookery, Geography and Independent Skills.

The Virtual Schools' main objective is to empower, inspire and celebrate success. As part of this process, it also;

- Prepares students for mainstream school;
- identifies any behaviours or concerns, and
- supports cultural differences.

THEME 4

COMMUNITY SAFETY

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE

- To increase the percentage of domestic violence sanctions
- To increase the reporting and detection of the child sexual offences monitored
- To reduce the number of young people who enter the youth justice system.

Why did we chose this equality objective?

Crime and safety is a key priority within the current Croydon Corporate Plan. Under the theme “*Everyone feels safe in their street, their neighbourhood, and their home*”, the current Council Corporate Plan includes the following actions:

- Work in partnership to develop a public health approach to tackling serious youth violence & knife crime
- Further develop services that support survivors of domestic & sexual violence, and disrupt the most prolific offenders
- Work with communities, businesses, police and other agencies to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour across the borough
- Deliver our Prevent Strategy to reduce radicalisation, extremism & hate crime
- Upgrade our CCTV infrastructure and ensure the control room is operating effectively to reduce crime and protect the public

The Safer Croydon Partnership (SCP) is a key element in the delivery of these objectives with our partners. The Safer Croydon Partnership is part of the overarching Croydon Strategic Partnership, which includes other partnership structures such as the Local Children Safeguarding, Adult Safeguarding and Health and Wellbeing Boards.

The requirement to have a Community Safety Partnership has existed for every locality since the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act. The responsibilities and requirements have been amended numerous times by legislation since 1998, including the statutory partners that constitute the partnership

Through the SCP Plan and DASV (Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence) Strategy (2018-2021) the partnership has the following priorities:

- To reduce the overall crime rate in the borough; focus on violent crime and domestic abuse.
- To improve the safety of children and young people.
- To tackle anti-social behaviour and environmental crime.
- To improve public confidence and community engagement.

What has happened?

Family Justice Centre (FJC)

The FJC is the Council's internal service that supports survivors of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (DASV). The team provides independent advocacy support and delivers its services at a new dedicated centre as well as at police stations, hospitals and numerous community based locations. The work of the service is aligned with the partnerships Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence strategy 2018-21.

Training and Increasing Referrals

Increasing Children's Social Care referrals to the FJC is an area which the DASV Programme Board focused delivering improvements. Through identifying this and delivering DASV training to Children's Social Care professionals at the start of the financial year we have seen an increase by 45% in the referrals made to the FJC by Children's Social Care. This is a positive outcome and will continue to be regularly monitored to help identify risks more efficiently. FJC regularly delivers training sessions to Council staff, schools and nurseries to help raise awareness of domestic violence and introduction to FJC services. The service also run the DASV Forum in conjunction with Croydon Voluntary Action. The Forum is open to anyone working with residents and families within the borough and is well attended (70 at the last event).

Reducing the number of young people that enter the youth justice system

The Council measures first time entrants (young people who have been convicted of an offence for the first time) and overall there has been a 30% reduction from 232 young people aged 10 to 17 during the period Oct 2016 to Sep 2017, compared 162 young people in Oct 2017 to Sept 2018.

Supporting this work is the joint decision making partnership with the police to divert young people who commit low level offences from the youth justice system. This improves outcomes and life chances for such young people not to be pulled into the youth justice system. During this period around 190 young people were diverted from prosecution.

We still have some challenges as compared to the rest of London we have the fifth highest number of first time entrants and we need to plug the gap with a wider, targeted, youth crime prevention offer to vulnerable children and young people.

The key actions that the Council has taken to deliver this outcome are:

- ✓ **Continuing to prioritise tackling all forms of domestic and sexual abuse and ensure there is a co-ordinated response across the borough.**
- ✓ **Ensuring the safety of our borough is at the very heart of Council services, with a co-ordinated and strategic approach at both the most senior levels of the council and on the front line, to ensure a prevention and early intervention are key priorities.**
- ✓ **Prioritising tackling serious youth violence and knife crime, and working towards making ours the safest borough for young people in London.**

The case study on the next page highlights the work supporting this theme.

Choose Your Future Campaign

The Choose Your Future campaign was developed in response to the top concerns raised by young people in the borough. As an umbrella campaign it builds on existing work and signposts to key services across the council, the police and other Local Strategic Partnership and community partners.

It aims to tackle serious youth violence and support young people to make positive choices, as well as the work with those directly affected by youth violence, and in particular, knife crime.

The campaign has been delivered in phases, with each developed and adjusted based on the needs and concerns of young people at the time.

Phase 1: My Future / My Voice (Oct 2017 to March 2018)

This raised awareness of the campaign across the borough. It showcased and successfully engaged with a range of young people, organisations and partners, with the young people sharing their views and concerns for their futures. Activities included a number of borough firsts including, the recruitment of a large cohort of council apprentices, taking part in the National Takeover Challenge and the election of Croydon's first Young Mayor and Deputy Young Mayor. This saw the campaign expand into phase two - young people having a voice.

Phase 2: My Choice (April 2018 to September 2018)

The campaign was delivered through digital and advertising opportunities, including outdoor poster sites, buses and tram advertising. These led the public to a series of 'My Choice' case studies – videos and written blogs developed by young people and hosted on the Choose Your Future website. A youth summit organised by the Croydon BME Forum focused on knife crime and gave young people an opportunity to ask questions directly to a panel of decision makers including the police, local councillors and MPs.

Working with specialist youth engagement teams, schools and the police the campaign delivered a 'Back to School' event to share anti-knife crime messages, ensure safety advice was given and encourage young people to share their views.

Phase 3: My Support (October 2018 to March 2019)

This phase of the campaign focused on:

- Signposting to advice and guidance to young people
- Helping them to staying safe
- 1-2-1 counselling
- Mental health support
- Jobs and opportunities.

It highlighted the specialist support being offered to vulnerable young people and adults, such as young women ex-prisoners, young people not in education or training (NEETS) including those at risk of exclusion. Partners include BME organisations, specialist mental health and well-being organisations. A second youth-led congress further gauged the views of young people.

Young people remain at the centre of the campaign and its content in terms of its messaging and themes.

We are using high profile local young people to embrace the power of role models and act as ambassadors to support the campaign. They are reflecting on their own stories and what they have achieved and are asking other young people to think about the choices they can make and encouraging them to get involved with the campaign.

By signposting to jobs and opportunities, the campaign has raised awareness amongst young people which has led to an increased number of young people taking up apprenticeships and participating in work placement and experiences such as the Takeover Challenge.

The campaign has supported better engagement with harder to reach young people not in education or training (NEETS) including those at risk of exclusion.

Croydon's BME Forum now has a well-established Serious Youth Violence Forum which helps coordinate and inform the activities of the local voluntary sector and public services.

The campaign is in line with Croydon's plans to establish a violence reduction network, which will also take a public health approach to help stop serious violence.

<http://news.croydon.gov.uk/londons-deputy-mayor-for-crime-and-policing-backs-croydons-plans-to-prevent-violence/>

The council and police have worked with the BRIT school to produce a performance and workshop for young people in schools, to give them a voice for their concerns around a range of issues including gangs and knife crime. <http://news.croydon.gov.uk/putting-knife-crime-spotlight/>

The majority of apprentices have been BME, female, and all the externally recruited apprentices who have progressed within the council are young people under the age of 25. Approximately 150 young people took part in the Takeover Challenge. <http://news.croydon.gov.uk/young-people-take-over-croydon/>

The Council funded two youth engagement workers to help support vulnerable young people in schools. The specialist youth workers facilitate six weekly, one-hour workshops to help nine to 14-year-olds keep themselves safe, and support their transition between primary and secondary education. <http://news.croydon.gov.uk/helping-young-people-make-positive-choices/>

In just one year, the campaign has:

- Facilitated engagement with over 3,000 young people.
- Supported Croydon's first Young Mayor election, engaging with 28 candidates and over 12,000 young voters.
- Brought together 40 young ambassadors who have directly supported the campaign.
- Gained the support of over 100 organisations, that promote the campaign and often partner on joint projects.
- Supported the creation of 30 new apprenticeships in Croydon Council.
- Supported Croydon's first Takeover Challenge day, engaging with 60 young participants.
- Launched 'You Choose', a play commissioned by the Council and police and taken to six schools in the borough.

- Been involved in several anti-knife crime events with Croydon Business Improvement District, the police and the Council's Youth Engagement Team.
- Amassed more than 1,000 followers on Instagram, a Facebook reach of over 120,000, and almost 500,000 impressions on twitter using #ChooseYourFuture.
- The campaign has been shortlisted for an LGA award and is seen as an example of good practice.

"What stands out about the Choose Your Future campaign is you helping us choose how our future should be"

A. Sultan, College Student.

Croydon Safe and Well Programme

Hundreds of Croydon pupils as young as nine are to benefit from a unique preventative programme, offering early targeted support to help them avoid becoming involved in crime and/or exploited.

Following a successful pilot, Safe and Well – a six-week programme designed by Croydon youth workers for vulnerable pupils aged nine-thirteen – is now being offered to primary and secondary schools across the borough.

Around 300 young people will benefit over one year, based on around 30 group work programmes and 60 being offered one-to-one support.

Delivered in schools by the council's youth engagement team, Safe and Well involves them working with small groups of pupils who are felt to be at risk of becoming victims or perpetrators of crime, antisocial behaviour or exploitation.

It was developed by youth workers after the local gang's team identified a gang whose members attended different secondary schools, but the majority had attended the same primary – highlighting the need for earlier intervention.

It is also based on exclusions data, which shows that the peak age for exclusions is Year 8 - just two years into secondary school. Primary schools reported that they often knew as early as Year 5 which pupils would struggle with the transition to secondary school, and could benefit from extra support.

Schools refer young people based on the following criteria:

- Pupils who have had at least one fixed-term exclusion or are approaching this.
- Pupils who are displaying antisocial behaviour in their local community and/or school.
- Pupils whose families have been affected by knife crime.

Safe and Well focuses on helping young people to spot and understand risky situations in their communities through group work, activities, discussions and games. It helps them understand peer pressure, the risk and ripple effect of violence; and crucially, to develop resilience to harmful influence, and resist difficult situations.

In line with the Choose Your Future campaign, it aims to provide young people with new opportunities, increase their confidence, encourage them to make positive choices – and understand consequences.

Safe and Well was initially launched as a pilot project - a six-week programme for two groups of 10 pupils in Years 5 and 6 at Forest Academy and South Norwood Academy, after Croydon Council successfully bid for MOPAC funding.

The success has been measured based on young people's feedback, and referring professionals' and parents' observations on development.

To date pupils in eight schools have received Safe and Well programme.

In every school:

- 100% said they had enjoyed the activities
- 100% said they had developed their skills
- 100% said they had strengthened friendships
- 100% said they felt happy and well
- 100% said they felt supported by staff

Below are quotes from some young people who have received the programme:

- *“I love that I can share things that’s on my mind freely.”*
- *“I learnt that gangs can have a bad effect on my life”*
- *“I feel safe to talk to an adult if something was on my mind”*
- *“I learnt grooming can come from all different types of people.”*
- *“I used what you taught me in a risky circumstance and it defused the situation.”*
- *“Saying no can save my life”*

The project also offers one-to-one support and ongoing specialist support where needed.

THEME 5

SOCIAL ISOLATION

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE

To reduce social isolation amongst disabled people and older people.

Why did we chose this equality objective?

Being socially isolated is different to loneliness but they are closely related and nationally 1 in 10 of people aged over 65 said they were lonely most or all of the time. Social isolation and loneliness affects all people across the life-course and not just older people. The Campaign to end Loneliness found 3 in 5 people who report poor health say that they are lonely some of the time or often, compared with 1 in 5 who report excellent health

The Opportunity and Fairness Commission highlighted that not only does social isolation have a significant personal cost but also has an implication for public services as it can lead to people needing more social and medical support. For example GPs and hospital accident and emergency departments had visits from people who were simply seeking someone to talk to or because their isolation has resulted in depression or another preventable illness. In addition, people often have prolonged stays in hospital because there is no one to care for them upon discharge.

What has happened?

In June 2016 a wide range of stakeholders came together to consider the issues in relation to social isolation and loneliness. The themes and issues raised were used by the Health and Wellbeing Board to develop a strategic response and social isolation action plan. The reduction of social isolation has been a key area of the Council's support for community capacity building including the approach to the Community Fund and Grants programme- £1.8m was allocated over three years to community groups working within the "A connected borough where no one is isolated" theme. It has been a central bank of the development of the One Croydon Alliance Programme.

The key actions that the Council has taken to deliver this outcome are:

- ✓ **Continue to work to reduce digital exclusion in the borough**
- ✓ **Tackling isolation through better access to services and facilities for all parts of the borough, particularly the most disadvantaged areas**
- ✓ **Work to improve the provision of affordable places to meet, socialise and learn.**

The case study on the next page highlights the work supporting this theme.

Living Independently for Everyone (LIFE)

The One Croydon Alliance is a partnership of six organisations; Croydon Council, Croydon CCG, Croydon Heath Services NHS Trust, South London and Maudsley Mental Health Trust, Age UK Croydon and Croydon GP Collaborative. The aim of the Alliance is ‘to support the people in Croydon to be independent and live longer, live healthier and fulfilling lives and be able to access high quality care, in the right place and at the right time’.

One Croydon have developed an integrated service called Living Independently for Everyone (LIFE) that helps older people to retain or regain their independence at times of change and transition, which promotes the health, well-being, independence, dignity and social inclusion of the individuals who are referred to the service.

The service provides intensive, proactive and goal-focused support for up to six weeks at times of high levels of need, when individuals require more clinical and social care interventions focussed on enabling individuals back to the optimum state of wellbeing, functioning and independence.

The service cares for individuals in their usual place of residence or an intermediate care setting. Providing intense, short medical, nursing, therapy and social care interventions helps prevent unnecessary hospital admissions and facilitates early supported discharge from a hospital ward.

The LIFE service operates 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

A total of 1333 individuals have been supported by the service to date.

Roberts Story:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJnSPgnmj7g>

Case Study

Q) Best thing about the care received?

“Being treated as a human being. Information I was given me has been very very good, they could not have done more for me”

Local Resident in Receipt of LIFE service

THEME 6

COMMUNITY COHESION

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE

To improve the proportion of people from different backgrounds who get on well together.

Why did we chose this equality objective?

In Croydon, communities are changing fast with the borough has one of the fastest growing BME populations in London. More than 50% of children and young people are from a BME background and approximately 47% of adults. More than 100 languages are spoken across the borough. Croydon also has the largest number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children. Croydon has a great sense of community pride but social cohesion is challenged when there are poor community relations and people from different backgrounds do get on and live isolated from each other. In addition, high levels of poverty lead to people feeling that a place is unfair, and they cannot influence change or trust organisations.

The Opportunity and Fairness Commission said that residents told them that too often there was a lack of respect amongst people living in their area and insufficient shared ownership of problems. Many residents mentioned people from different backgrounds moving into their local area and their struggle to create strong integrated communities especially at times when national or international activity can cause concern locally. In addition, the Commission highlighted that while migration had brought new energy and perspectives, there was recognition that communities were isolated from each other rather than working together to tackle shared challenges. However, many people told the Commission that they would be willing to do more in their local community including volunteering and wanted to participate and influence what was going on locally and across the borough.

What has happened?

Recent national events have provided a challenging environment for community cohesion. Croydon has come together as a community to support each other with partners across the borough and faiths showing solidarity and providing community assurance. This has included community events such as We Stand Together to provide a forum to support communities impacted by hate crime and explore issues that face different communities within Croydon. The Council has continued to support community development, capacity building and events to strengthen cohesion.

The key actions that the Council has taken to deliver this outcome are:

- ✓ **Community Fund and Community Grants programme with £2.1M committed to vibrant responsible and connected communities over three years.**
- ✓ **Celebrating Croydon's diversity and heritage, highlighting the positive contribution of its refugee communities and those who have chosen Croydon as their home.**
- ✓ **Increasing investment in Community Ward Budgets.**
- ✓ **Delivered a programme of proactive walkabouts where the Cabinet Member for Safer Croydon and Communities, Borough Commander of Croydon Police and local councillors make visits to different parts of the borough throughout the year.**

The case studies below highlight the work supporting this theme.

Community Ward Budgets

The Community Ward Budget programme was agreed by Cabinet on 22 June 2015. The programme was built on the local democratic process that already existed to provide specific allocated resources to councillors to work in partnership with communities and support organisations and projects that benefit communities within their ward.

In Croydon there are numerous success stories demonstrating how local communities work together to solve problems or improve the places where they live. The results and achievement far outweigh the small investments required to achieve these successes. The programme seeks to harness that success and energy to deliver the things that matter to our residents in the wards that they call their home.

A diverse range of projects within the community were supported to play a full part in making decisions, and delivering Council priorities. Projects supported empowered communities to take a more active role in delivering a cleaner and safer environment. Projects enabled people to do more for themselves and rely less on public services such as delivering community events or local initiatives.

Below are some examples of projects that have been supported via ward budgets;

- PrideFest – event that celebrates the LGBT+ community in Croydon.
- Purley Youth Project - project that aims to keep young people off the streets and provide safe, fun and learning-based activities for young people to enjoy, including taking them on trips out, such as a four day residential to the Isle of Wight in June 2017.
- Achieving with Autism - raises awareness of autism amongst students in primary schools by equipping students with digestible information and providing a positive framework for them to discuss and explore neurodiversity. By shining a light on autism, the project aims to reduce bullying, anxiety and social isolation.
- Parade of Nations – funding towards the costs of hosting an annual celebration of the diverse communities who have chosen Croydon as their home
- Croydon mosque interfaith events - funding support for a series of four annual interfaith events aimed at promoting dialogue across Croydon's many faith communities.

Celebrating Diversity

The Council supports a programme of events to celebrate the Borough's diversity and promote community cohesion.

Below are details of two annual events hosted by the Council;

Croydon PrideFest

Croydon PrideFest 2018 represented a significant step change from 2017, in both scale and diversity. Prior to the event a number of Croydon Pride mix and mingle events were organised in partnership with Croydon Pride, the cross-organisational network and the local LGBT+ community. The events increased awareness of the LGBT+ community and Croydon PrideFest which resulted in the doubling of numbers attending the parade (approx. 1000 people) and the largest number ever attending Croydon PrideFest (approx. 5,000). There was notably a younger demographic attending, particularly young bi and/or trans people which visibly demonstrated how comfortable the event made young LGBT+ people feel.

The event had a larger parade and thereby a greater impact in the town centre. The route went down the town centre's two key retail streets with several retail shops showing their support by displaying rainbow visual merchandising on their shopfronts or shop windows. The organisation TransPALS were invited to lead the parade as a message of solidarity after the Trans exclusionary protest at London Pride, thus providing the local trans community a very visible presence in the parade route.

Croydon PrideFest was also widely promoted across the borough. Promotional posters were displayed on belly bins and sites across the borough. The event was also promoted on social media.

The event was also well attended by a significant numbers of councillors (22) with some providing further support by awarding funding from their ward budgets towards the event. All three of Croydon's MPs spoke at the event with the Leader of the Council reflecting his commitment to Pride and Croydon's LGBT+ community. The Croydon PrideFest 2018 video shows how great the event was:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C5DAgKwfwY&feature=youtu.be>.

We were impressed with the whole event and enjoyed having the time to really talk to people. It was fantastic to see so many young people there too, as they might often be excluded from bigger Prides because of cost and access.

Rob Pateman, Stonewall

Croydon International Mela

Free event that celebrates the culture of Croydon's Asian communities and showcases a combination of musical legends, international artists, local talent, extraordinary dance and spectacular street theatre.

Zee Croydon International Mela is a timely symbol of our diverse communities and dynamic Borough. It celebrates a rainbow of cultures and traditions through music, dance, food and culture at a time when community tensions may be higher, it is an important reminder that above all, love always wins.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6cncr-spAmRq&feature=youtu.be>

THEME 7 HEALTH

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE

To reduce differences in life expectancy between communities.

Why did we chose this equality objective?

The Annual Report of the Director of Public Health for 2018 identified a number of significant inequalities in health outcomes in the borough. It is well accepted that inequalities result in poor health, social, educational and economic outcomes across the whole of the life course and across generations.

The Indices of Deprivation 2015 showed that health deprivation and disability indicator is greatest in West Thornton, Broad Green, Selhurst and Thornton Heath as well as New Addington and Fieldway. West Thornton and Selhurst had become significantly more deprived in this domain since index of multiple deprivation data was last released in 2010. Finally there are higher levels of income poverty amongst older people in ethnically diverse wards in the north of the borough along with a lack of access to services such as a post office or community services.

Girls born in some areas of Croydon are expected to live six years more than their counterparts in other areas and for boys, the difference is over nine years. There is also a difference in how long people can expect to live in a healthy state. As an example, women in Old Coulsdon are expected to live at least nine years longer in a healthy state than women in Broad Green.

What has happened?

Croydon's current performance is similar or better than average on a range of health outcome indicators including alcohol related hospital admissions, preventable deaths from cardio vascular diseases and childhood obesity at reception year. Croydon's performance has improved for the several measures of perceived wellbeing, and is above the London average for all four of them (Life Satisfaction, Well-being, Happiness and Anxiety).

Improvements in life expectancy and reductions in preventable deaths partly reflect changes in lifestyle over time. Good overall performance however masks significant variation within the borough which continue to be an issue. Outcomes still tend to be poorer in areas of higher deprivation. Lifestyle advice and support is being brought together through the Live Well programme, an integrated lifestyle programme with the overarching aim of reducing health inequalities across the borough.

The key actions that the Council has taken to deliver this outcome are:

- ✓ **Improved health and social care for the residents of Croydon.**
- ✓ **Establishment of the One Croydon Alliance in order to integrate provision of hospital, primary care, mental health and social services for all ages.**
- ✓ **Investment into young persons' mental health services to support the help needed at an early stage.**
- ✓ **Working with the voluntary sector and communities to improve physical and mental health**

✓ **Continuing to work to reduce ill-health, including promoting mental health and reducing inequalities in health care**

The case study below highlights the work supporting this theme.

St Pauls 'Plug-In' initiative

The development of the St Pauls 'Plug-In' initiative has seen a range of community led activities aimed at improving the health and well-being of the local Thornton Heath community.

The programme is built on three basic principles engagement, opportunities and support. It focuses on finding the best ways of engaging with the patients and the wider Croydon community, developing an array of local based opportunities proven to assist in their health self-management and supporting them through the transition of long term behavioural change.

The project was developed through working in partnership with Croydon Social P Social Prescribing project. Activities that support people to improve their health and wellbeing were identified. These were endorsed by GPs and practitioners at the Parchmore GP practice.

The project continues to work with a range of partners including the Safer Neighbourhood Team, Parchmore Church and Community Centre, Age UK, Best Start Community Builder and the Croydon Voluntary Action Day Opportunity Community Builder. It also has direct contact with the NHS Croydon University Hospital who run a Falls Clinic. It also works in partnership with local councillors and the local MP and is part of a network of churches involved in Social Prescribing as a means to work in partnership with the community and make it a safe, enjoyable place to live or work.

The project has been reaching out to all communities young and old and is working on promoting more inter-generational activities. Activities are held in the church hall on a weekly basis at no or minimal cost for those attending. Activities include senior exercise classes, NHS falls exercise class, mindfulness classes, counselling , housing surgeries and coffee, cake and chat drop in to name but a few.

Feedback forms back from the exercise activities show that not only are individuals getting fitter, but they are reversing serious conditions such as Type two diabetes.

Participants in the initiative are much more aware of the importance of looking after their own health and their need to take control of that. They also believe it is helping socially, as many have made new friends and something that literally gets them out of the house. They report that they feel calmer, less stressed, having more energy, reducing medication.

Feedback from service user:

'It was at a Patient Participation Meeting at my doctors' practice where I first heard of social prescribing and, more specifically, of Janey's exercise classes, though I'll admit my initial reaction was rather dismissive. It instinctively sounded like the kind of structured activity ideal for people who are not very fit.

That was in November 2017. By February of the following year it had dawned on me that walking in my everyday life would not be enough to maintain my fitness and ensure I could fully enjoy my holidays tramping around the Lake District and Pembrokeshire's coastal path. I would be short of breath on steep climbs and, sometimes, have to stop for a while before carrying on. It was that realisation which prompted me to abandon feeling so self-conscious and try out the classes.

Fast forward 10 months and I have scarcely missed a session. Exercises which seemed strenuous in February now feel comfortable and invigorating. Janey encourages us to proceed at our own pace to allow everyone to participate on their own level.

Looking around the crammed Church Hall at St Paul's this morning, I saw rows of smiling faces, the positive energy in the room palpable.

Personally, I have made huge physical progress. I now march up hills without stopping or suffering breathlessness. My medication has been reduced and my back, which used to grind uncomfortably as I trudged along, is now much stronger. I feel I am taking ownership of my condition and doing something to help myself.

My husband, 77, now joins in once a week. Highly resistant to the idea of organised exercise initially, he, too, is now one of the class's most enthusiastic members. The whole experience has been revelatory'.

THEME 8 OUR WORKFORCE

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE

To create a modern and diverse workforce that is representative of the communities we serve and building and further developing a valued, engaged and motivated workforce

As a council we have committed to:

- Ensuring the council has a representative workforce.
- Providing staff with training and support to enable them to manage and/or work within a diverse workforce.
- Addressing any unfair treatment in the workplace particularly relating to any of the 'protected characteristics'.
- Recognising the contribution of the staff network groups and supporting their work.

Why do we monitor the workforce?

The workforce profile provides a valuable source of data about the Council's workforce, that:

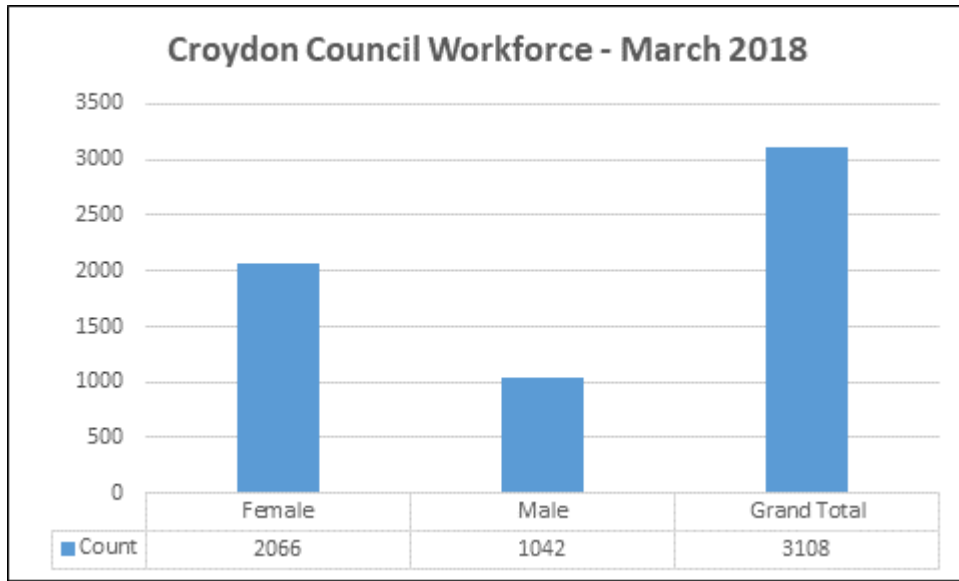
- Provides evidence the Council is meeting its general equalities duty to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations.
- Supports delivery of some of the Council's key workforce objectives and values, most notably: a modern, diverse and inclusive workforce that is reflective of the borough's community, and the attraction, recruitment and retention of talented staff and leaders.
- Alongside other sources such as staff survey results and organisational health monitoring, informs and delivery of workforce planning priorities including the development of HR policies and procedures and learning and development and planning.
- Is a resource to help monitor workforce performance and provide benchmarking information to assist workforce planning and equality analysis.

Workforce representation by protected characteristics

Our breakdown of the workforce is mapped against Croydon residents' 2011 census statistics regarding gender, ethnicity, and disability and religion characteristics. Whilst Croydon has a positive gender mix, there is more to do on ethnicity and disability if we are to meet our aspiration of employing a workforce that is representative of our communities. We have made progress in increasing disclosure rates for ethnicity and disability, sexual orientation and religious belief within the last twelve months.

It is useful to highlight the levels of staff who have declared that they prefer not to say in respect of protected characteristics (as shown over leaf). We will be exploring why individual staff may be reticent to declare and stress the benefits of insight and understanding to inform initiatives to improve representation at all levels via the Council's Culture Board.

Croydon Council Workforce - March 2018

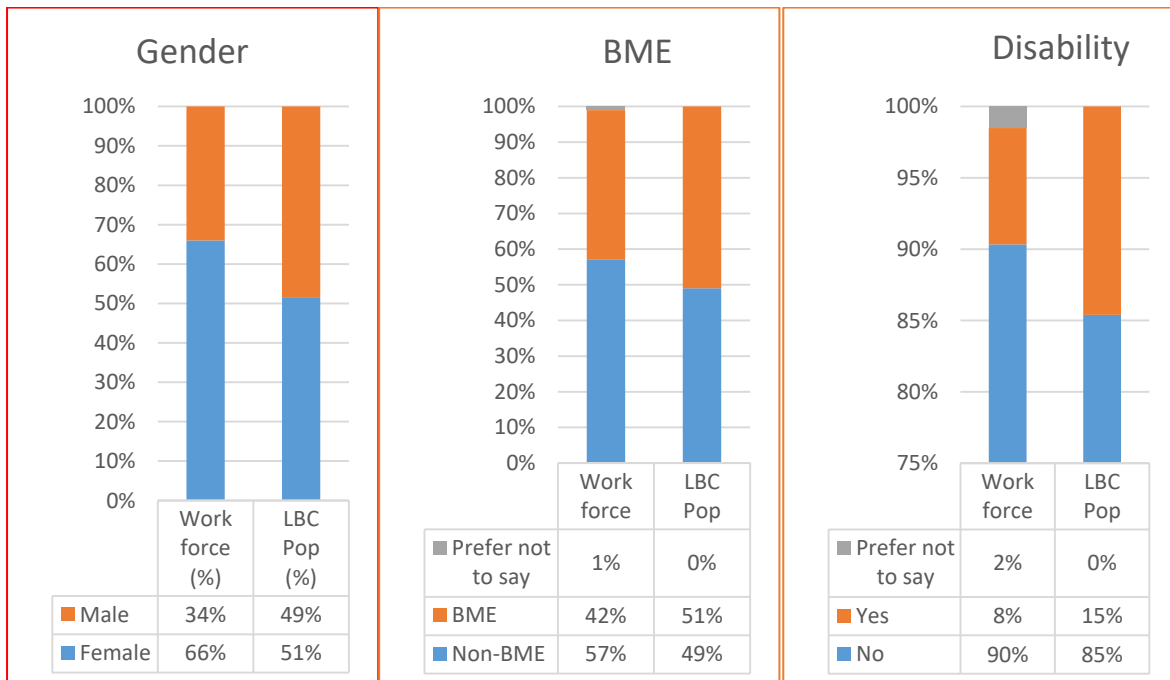


Our current non-disclosure rates for the protected characteristics below are as follows:

Ethnicity: 25%

Disability: 30%

Religious Belief: 31%



The 2011 census did not collect information from respondents on sexual orientation or sexual identity, therefore the council does not have a community comparator to map against. However the council undertakes workforce monitoring on sexuality and has collated data over the last five years (see chart below).

During this monitoring period we have seen a small but positive increase in LGBT representation and a decrease in those electing to prefer not to say. The council also achieved a positive outcome in the stonewall index, placing it 101st out of 445 employers, its highest rating so far.

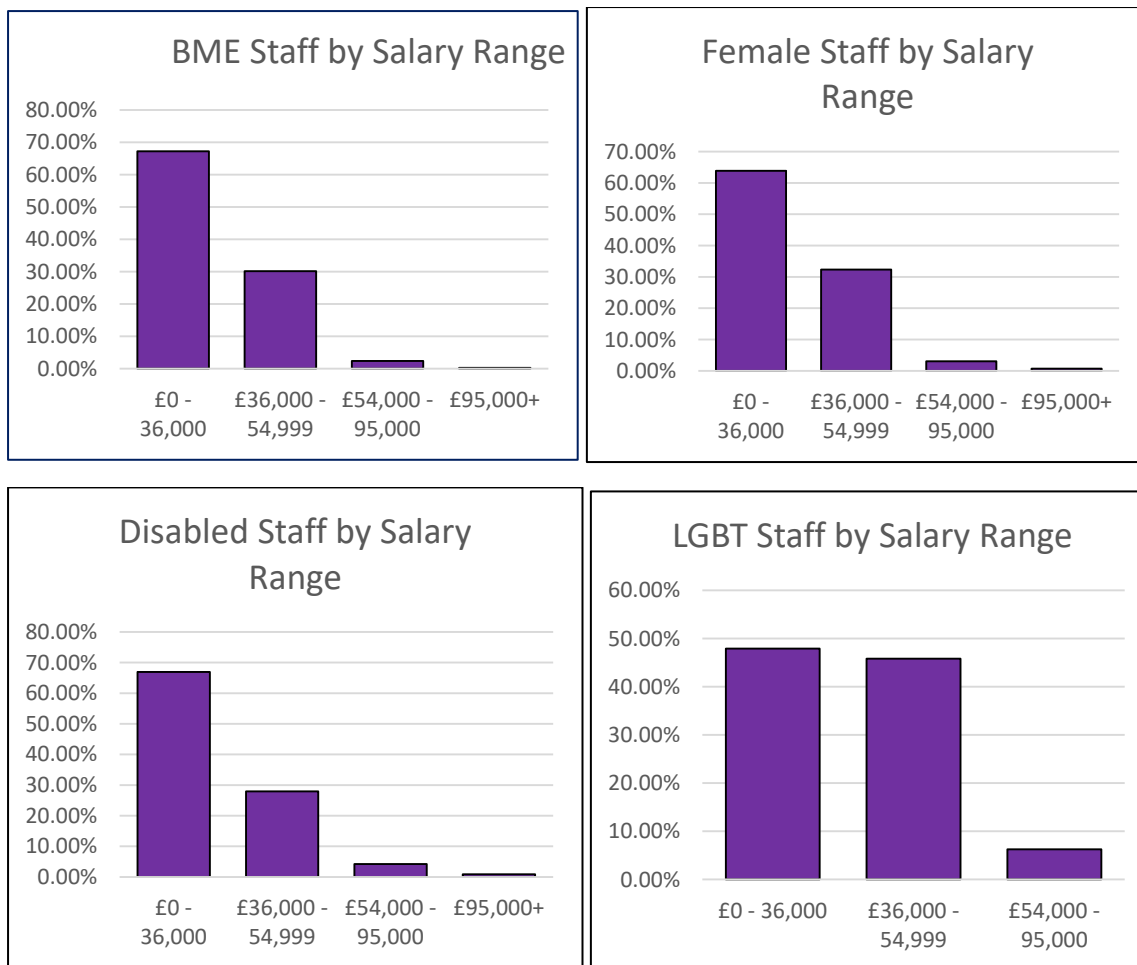
	LBC 2013		LBC 2014		LBC 2015/16	
Bisexual	8	0.30%	9	0.30%	4	0.15%
Heterosexual	2,270	71.50%	2,117	71.40%	1,714	63.36%
Homosexual	45	1.40%	38	1.30%	28	1.04%
Other	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	85	3.14%
Prefer Not To Say	854	26.90%	803	27.00%	874	32.31%

	LBC 2016/17		LBC 2017/18	
Bisexual	8	0.38%	10	0.49%
Heterosexual	1606	76.19%	1572	76.72%
*categories recorded were 'Gay Man or Lesbian Woman'	37	1.76%	38	1.85%
Other	66	3.13%	59	2.88%
Prefer Not To Say	391	18.55%	370	18.06%

The Council is continuing to review and update terminology to describe sexual orientation categories referencing the latest Stonewall guidance and advice.

Equalities profile by earnings

It has already been highlighted that the workforce at Croydon is not yet representative of its community in respect of ethnicity and disability. The equalities monitoring of our workforce further indicates that there is also an under-representation within the workforce across salary ranges, with a negative funnelling of representation for BME staff at senior level. It is interesting to note a more positive distribution for staff declaring a disability. From 2018-19 several senior staff were appointed which may positively influence diversity at this level but it is recognised underrepresentation still exists.



NOTE: data shows positive declarations on protected characteristics

Gender Pay Gap Reporting:

From 2018 it is a legal requirement for the Council to publish its gender pay gap workforce data. A gender pay gap compares the difference between how much people from one gender are paid on average compared with people from another gender. It is the average difference between the remuneration for men and women who are working. It is not a comparison of pay between people doing the same work.

In 2018 the Council reported a mean gender pay gap of 1.6% and a median gender pay gap of 2.4% which compare favourably in comparison with other local authorities and regional statistics. In 2019 the Council will report a mean gender pay gap of 1.6% and a median gender pay gap of 2.6 % which is comparable to last year's statistics. These figures will be reported to on the government portal and the council's website by 30th March 2019.

The Council intend to publish pay gap for disability and ethnicity characteristics. Further details will be published on the Council's website by 30th March 2019.

What are the key successes?

Our workforce profile illustrates that although our workforce is not yet fully reflective of the population we serve, we are seeing changes in our workforce as a result of a variety of initiatives.

These include:

- Staff diversity network groups: we have six staff diversity network groups within the council who have supported change to our workforce profile by their visibility of staff diversity through awareness raising events, communications campaigns and role modelling. They have also worked actively with the community in activities such as volunteering and event promotions.
- All staff diversity group network chairs sit on our culture board which is held monthly and chaired by the Chief Executive. The Board includes staff ambassadors and senior management representatives. The Culture Board aims to set the direction for improving culture and oversee all the changes within the council to ensure that we “create an organisation where talent can flourish”.
- Staff Survey: in 2018 over 755 of staff completed the staff survey which was the highest ever level of response. The results indicated that over 80% of staff indicates satisfaction with their role and over 90% were proud to work for Croydon. The council is working via Culture Board to address challenges that have been raised including improving information and communications technology (ICT) and increasing consistent management practice.
- To address inequalities in diversity at middle and senior management levels, leadership programmes have been implemented specifically for employees who are women or of BME ethnicity.
- In 2018 we started a campaign within the council to increase levels of disclosure of equality characteristics by employees. As at February 2019 we have seen levels of disclosure significantly increase since June 2018 for these characteristics: disability (8% increase); sexual orientation (4% increase), religious belief (5% increase).
- Timewise Accreditation: we are now accredited (since December 2016) as a Flexible Working borough and are continuing to advocated and promote flexible and agile working for our existing workforce and potential employees.
- Disability Confident Employer: we are accredited as a Disability Confident Employer (since 2017) and have worked with our Disability Network Group internally and with the community in promoting good practice and training managers.
- ENEI awards: we achieved the Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion award for ‘Overall Public Sector Winner’ in 2018. This award recognised the strengths of the submissions we made to ENEI. We also won an award for our Apprenticeships work and the Mental Health and Wellbeing Networks Group was highly commended.
- Stonewall Workplace Equality Index: 2019 marked our highest placing for Stonewall. We achieved a placing of 101 out of 445 employers entered, placing us in the top 25% of employers.
- REBA (Reward and Employer Benefits Association) Health and Wellbeing Awards: in 2019 we achieved the award for ‘Innovation’ from the REBA in recognition of the

ground breaking work the Menopause Steering Group (a sub-group of the Women's Staff Network) has undertaken to spread awareness and provide resources and support to women in the workforce who have been impacted.

The key actions that the Council have taken to deliver these outcomes are:

- ✓ **Supporting and developing our staff network groups.**
- ✓ **Becoming a 'default' agile working employer since 2016 and enabling new employees to request formal flexible working patterns from the start date of employment.**
- ✓ **Improving and promoting our policies around family friendly leave, unpaid leave and offering up to ten days purchased leave.**
- ✓ **Assisting employees with leave for family issues including caring, premature birth and parental bereavement.**

What Next

Based on the data on pages 33-35 there will be focus in the following areas in the future:

- Develop a workforce strategy that will lay out our commitment to our staff, and provide the framework by which we will ensure we have the right people with the right skills, doing the right jobs at the right time. This will be key to creating an agile and capable workforce that can partner with residents to deliver better outcomes for local people and create the dynamic, fair and inclusive workplace that we aspire to.
- To ensure the strategy can take us to where we want to be and be open and honest about where we are now, we are working with an industry professional who is examining our data, headline themes from last year's staff survey and engaging with a selection of staff. The output from this work will highlight where we need to concentrate our efforts.
- We will involve staff in the development of the strategy as we want to hear about the sort of place they want Croydon Council to be.
- Examining gender segregation of some roles, particularly where there is a high gap between male and female
- Understanding and tackling the issues regarding low numbers of BAME in senior management roles
- Encouraging higher disclosure declarations, particularly around disability and sexual orientation

Our good practice case studies below further highlight the work that has been ongoing:

Flexible Working

In early 2014 a survey of lone parents in Croydon was carried out by the Council in partnership with Jobcentre Plus and children's centres. The parents, all of whom used children's centre services, reported that barriers to finding sustainable work were high costs of childcare, and a lack of part-time and flexible jobs which allow parents to combine caring responsibilities with work.

Around half of responses recognised that beyond the additional income, being in work would increase their independence and provide a positive role model to their children. In addition a sense of purpose (by one in four) and social contact (by one in five) were identified as factors.

What were the key areas for improvement and main drivers for the council in championing flexible working?

- Encouraging residents, especially lone parents and those living in poverty, into work (in the context of above).
- Reducing council office costs through remote working.
- Attraction and retention of staff through flexible working.
- Increasing number of Council staff working flexibly particularly men and those at higher grades.
- Influencing other Croydon employers to actively promote and encourage flexible working.

What were the key deliverables?

- Development of a Flexible Working Implementation Plan across the Council – this included working as a cross council team from 2014 – 2016.
- Achieve Timewise accreditation as a flexible working Council – this was achieved in December 2016 and has been renewed annually.
- Agree an engagement plan to promote flexible working – the internal flexible working policy was reviewed and re-issued in 2016 alongside a campaign to encourage agile working principles.
- Inclusive and accessible recruitment processes. This includes ensuring that potential new recruits are aware of our commitment to enabling our workforce to work in an agile way; being an inclusive employer; having discussions with prospective employees' about flexible working options; and encouraging applications from under-represented groups (where this exists). All job advertisements from the council include this phrase: "we will be pleased to consider applications from candidates seeking flexible working arrangements."
- Improving our understanding as a Council of current flexible working arrangements through better management information better performance assessment and tracking; All formal flexible working arrangements are logged on the HR system
- Introducing an Employment Charter for Croydon which includes a commitment to flexible working and timewise accreditation. Flexible working is mentioned as part of the 'Good Employer' framework.

Outcome

- The Flexible Working Implementation Plan was developed with ownership across elected members and Council senior management;
- Accreditation from Timewise as a Flexible Working Council was achieved in December 2016;
- The 'Good Employer Charter' launched in January, 2017 with 10 employers achieving Good Employer accreditation and 38 Good Employer Charter pledges includes a reference to flexible working as a criteria for applicants.
- All council jobs are advertised to encourage applicants who are seeking flexible working arrangements.
- In September 2017 a snap poll confirmed that over 70% of respondents worked flexibly and were supported in doing so.
- The staff survey in March 2018 also stated that 78% of respondents had flexibility in how and where they worked. Also 80% of respondents felt they had a good work life balance within the council.

Cultural change around some elements of flexible working is still challenging – for example 19% of the workforce are part-time workers and of this group the overwhelming majority comprises female employees 71% against 29% male employees.

This work had helped the council achieve the equality objectives below:

- Employment (aiming to get lone parents/carers into the workforce)
- Child Poverty (by assisting lone parents)
- Community cohesion (by encouraging applications from the diverse local community)
- Social isolation (by encouraging applications from disabled and older individuals)

In looking at the figures relating to protected groups the key beneficiaries may be:

- Gender (female) staff
- Disabled staff
- Pregnancy and Maternity

Currently staff identifying as female staff comprise 67% of the Croydon Council workforce and within formal flexible working arrangements their representation is 70%.

Disabled staff comprise 8% of the Croydon Council workforce, but within formal flexible working arrangements their representation is 2.5% part-time and 6% full-time flexible. However as stated previously due to the large numbers of staff working in informal agile and flexible working arrangements no necessary negative conclusions can be drawn from this.

Women on maternity leave during 2017 -18 comprised 5% of the workforce. We have no figures for any impact on this staff group returning to flexible or agile working but as the numbers of women in formal arrangements exceeds their workforce representation, it may be surmised that a large number of women returning from maternity leave may be using flexible/agile working opportunities.

Increasing Staff Disclosure of Protected Characteristics

The council has been committed to improving the rates of disclosure by employees of their protected characteristics over a number of years. By improving disclosure the council will be able to:

- Build an accurate picture of the workforce.
- Ensure that all members of the workforce are treated fairly (by monitoring equality of opportunities).
- Ensure that staff can be themselves at work.
- Make sure the workforce strives to reflect the community we serve.
- Ensure that our policies are not indirectly discriminatory.

As a council we also strive to be accurate in our reporting of the diversity of our workforce as this will help us plan new initiatives and campaigns.

We were aware that there were several obstacles to staff completing their equality data which included:

- Lack of awareness by staff that their data was incomplete.
- Lack of knowledge (of the self-service system) by staff regarding how to complete their data online.
- Lack of insight by staff into why completing this data was important.
- Suspicion regarding the confidentiality of the data.

We were aware that our disclosure levels were particularly disappointing (as at June 2018) for areas such as;

- Disability (approx. 38 % non-disclosure)
- Religious belief (approx. 36% non-disclosure)
- Sexual orientation (approx. 34% non-disclosure)
- Ethnicity (approx. 25% non-disclosure)

A campaign to increase levels of disclosure was crafted to address this issue. The campaign focused on specific areas. This resulted in a rise in disclosure rates, bringing disability, religious belief and sexual orientation disclosure levels up to around 75 - 80% and ethnicity up to 85%.

In September 2018 an intranet and plasma screen campaign was launched with the collaboration of Internal Communications, Human Resources and Staff Network Groups.

Information was clearly presented to staff detailing:

- How to check and update equality information
- Why it was important to do so
- Who would be able to see this information
- Asking staff to check their data and personal contact information
- How the data would be used

Also included were screen shots detailing how data could be updated and an frequently asked questions (FAQs) document with answers to questions about disclosing equalities data.

Staff diversity network groups (who comprise approximately 30% of the council) also sent out communications to staff reminding them of the importance of disclosure.

During Black History Month in October, several 'drop in' sessions were held to encourage staff to update their equality records.

Additionally, from September onwards all diversity events included a reference to disclosure in all their communications to staff.

In November 2018, the Chair of the Mental Health Staff Network also drafted a piece about her working life and the interaction with her physical and mental health entitled 'Why updating your One Oracle equality data helps everyone'.

In December 2018 – January 2019, the HR Equalities and Policy Manager sent out personal emails to all staff who had joined the council from 2014 – 2016 encouraging them to check and update their equalities data.

From October onwards reports were produced every two weeks to measure the levels of disclosure and non-disclosure rates for specific categories (ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation and disability). Increases have been observed from June 2018 – January 2019.

Non-Disclosure Rates: June 2018 – February 2019

	June 2018	February 2019	% change
Ethnicity	25%	25%	No change
Disability	38%	30%	+ 8%
Religious Belief	36%	31%	+ 5%
Sexual Orientation	34%	30%	+ 4%

Croydon's Culture Board's vision is to "create a collaborative, inclusive and creative environment which allows talent to flourish"

Ultimately we aim to create an environment where staff are able to 'be themselves' so if they are willing to communicate openly and disclose protected characteristics this shows increasing levels of engagement and confidence in the Council which will be reflected in performance levels and satisfaction surveys.

We will continue to promote the benefits of disclosure to our workforce during 2019 and link this to our promotions regarding the change to self-service on-line systems, it is anticipated that further increases in disclosure rates will be observed.

Appendix 1**Additional sources for information on equality and inclusion in Croydon****Croydon Opportunity and Fairness Commission Report**

The Croydon Opportunity and Fairness Commission was an independent Commission set up by Croydon Council in 2015. It sought to understand the challenges faced by the people of Croydon and put forward recommendations that would help create a fairer and better place to live. You can obtain a copy of the report by clicking the link below

https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/articles/downloads/Croydon_Opportunity_%26_fairness%20Commission_final_report.pdf

Croydon Observatory

The Croydon Observatory provides access to data and information about Croydon. It is an information sharing, mapping and reporting website that can be used by anyone. The observatory contains links to key strategies, information on the Borough's demographic profile which can be broken down easily into ward profiles. The site also includes data broken down by protected characteristics as outlined in the Equality Act 2010. Please click link below to access the observatory.

<https://www.croydonobservatory.org/>

Equality and Inclusion Policy 2016-20

The council's ambition is to make Croydon a stronger, fairer place where no community is held back. It acknowledges its statutory equality duty as a Public Sector employer under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

It recognises it has an important community leadership role and will use this opportunity to advance equality, fairness and community cohesion as well as to improve the social and economic environment in the borough

Please click link below for a copy of the Council's equality and inclusion policy

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/articles/downloads/Equality%20Policy%20Statement.pdf>

Workforce Profile 2016-2017

The workforce profile provides a valuable source of data about the Croydon Council workforce that provides evidence the Council is meeting its general equalities duty to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations.

Please click link below for a copy of the Council's workforce profile

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/articles/downloads/Workforce%20Profile%20-%202017%20-%202018.pdf>