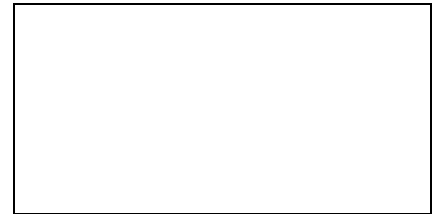


**Calderdale MBC**

**Wards Affected All**

**Cabinet 8<sup>th</sup> November 2021**



## **Report of Director of Public Services**

### **Everyone Different Everyone Matters: Meeting the Equality Duty Report 2021**

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty, public authorities were required to develop and publish equality objectives by 6 April 2012 and then at least every four years. Calderdale Council's revised equality objectives were approved and published on the Council's website in 2017.
- 1.2 Following the introduction of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 organisations listed under the Equality Act are now also required to publish and report specific figures about their gender pay gap. The gender pay gap is the difference between the average earnings of men and women, expressed relative to men's earnings. The obligations apply if employers have 250 or more employees on the snapshot date of 31 March of a given year.
- 1.3 To comply with the 'Equality duty' we report on our equality progress on at least an annual basis. This report outlines progress against the six corporate equality objectives and also provides an analysis of the workforce. Gender Pay Gap data including the ethnic pay gap is also be presented alongside the analysis of the workforce.

#### **2. Need for a decision**

- 2.1 When Cabinet agreed the adoption of its equality objectives in 2017, it requested that a report outlining progress against the Council's equality objectives should be brought to Cabinet on an annual basis.

#### **3. Recommendation**

Cabinet are asked to:

- 3.1 Note the reports presented to them in accordance with the statutory requirement under the Equality Act 2010 and subsequent regulations.
- 3.2 Following alignment of the reporting timelines agree to receive a further updated report in 2022 and annually thereafter.

## 4. Background and/or details

- 4.1 The Equality Act 2010 aims to tackle discrimination and inequality, and to ensure that all people are treated fairly and equitably. It specifically prevents discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnership, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.
- 4.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty within the Act requires public bodies, such as Calderdale Council, to give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good community relations.
- 4.3 The Act sets specific duties for public bodies to:
- Publish information to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty at least annually, starting by 31 January 2012.
  - Prepare and publish one or more equality objectives at least every four years, starting by 6 April 2012.
- 4.4 The Act states that the information published must include information relating to people who share a relevant protected characteristic who are:
- Its employees (for authorities with more than 150 staff)
  - People affected by its policies and practices (for example, service users).
- 4.5 Under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 any organisation that has 250 or more employees must now publish and report specific figures about their gender pay gap. The figure must be calculated using a specific reference/snapshot date:
- 31 March for public sector organisations
  - 5 April for businesses and charities.
- 4.6 Under the 2017 regulations employers must:
- publish their gender pay gap data and a written statement on their public-facing website within a year of the snapshot date
  - report their data to government online - using the gender pay gap reporting service.
- 4.7 The gender pay gap shows the differences in the average pay between men and women unlike equal pay which deals with the pay differences between men and women who carry out the same jobs, similar jobs or work of equal value ( it is unlawful to pay people unequally because they are a man or a woman).
- 4.8 To meet our responsibilities as an employer, workforce analysis has been carried out annually to look at progress on workplace equality and to help the Council to identify and address any areas of underrepresentation or disparity. The HR Workforce and Gender Pay Gap reports are published as separate documents and both accompany the Calderdale Council's annual equality progress report.

4.9 Appendix 1 provides a summary and highlights some areas of equality improvement covering the period April 2020 to March 2021.

## **5. Options considered**

5.1 No alternative options have been considered as the Council has a statutory duty to publish its gender pay data and its progress against its 'Equality duty' and equality objectives to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

## **6. Financial implications**

6.1 Actions to make further progress on the Council's equality objectives and workforce action plan(s) will be contained within existing budgets

## **7. Legal Implications**

7.1 The Council has a statutory duty to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and subsequent regulations.

## **8. Consultation**

8.1 None applicable.

## **9. Environment, Health and Economic Implications**

9.1 National research/evidence indicates that some protected groups are at higher risk of developing health problems and lower wellbeing as a consequence of issues such as deprivation, inequalities and social exclusion. As indicated within this report, Calderdale Council's progress on equality has and will hopefully continue to have a positive impact on people's health and overall wellbeing.

## **10. Equality and Diversity**

10.1 The very nature of the proposals within this report is to help advance equality. Actions to achieve the objectives include carrying out Equality Impact Assessments on policy and service developments and procurement exercises. The Impact Assessment tool also includes a requirement to consider the staffing implications of proposed courses of action.

## **11. Summary and Recommendations**

11.1 Calderdale Council is committed to delivering fair and accessible services to achieve the best outcomes for the people it serves. Reducing inequality continues to be one of three priorities in the Council's ambition to be the Best Borough in the North.

11.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty gives the Council the opportunity to build upon the work it has done already to demonstrate its commitment to the principle of equality of opportunity and the provision of public services that meet the needs of all local people.

11.3 Covid-19 and the Black lives Movement (#BLM) campaign has highlighted the inequality that communities face, we recognise this as a Council and as this report demonstrates, we have sought to respond to the disproportionate impact that the pandemic has had on certain groups such as BAME people, women, disabled people, people with caring responsibilities and people from certain socio-economic groups by providing targeted support.

11.4 Mindful that the Covid-19 pandemic has and may continue to limit our level of engagement with communities and staff, we are firmly committed to building on what we have already achieved. Against the backdrop of reduced budgets, demographic shifts, changing public expectations, demands for personalisation and choice, changing patterns of working we will continue to identify ways to ensure fair access and equitable outcomes, celebrating diversity and strengthening community cohesion within Calderdale as it does so.

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**The documents used in the preparation of this report are:**

1. EHRC Equality Act 2010 guidance
2. EHRC Public Sector Equality Duty guidance
3. Cabinet Report 19<sup>th</sup> June 2017 – Calderdale Council's Equality Objectives

## Appendix 1:

### Executive Summary

This is an executive summary of Calderdale Council's Everyone Different Everyone Matters: Meeting the Equality Duty April 2020 – March 2021. It provides a brief snapshot of the report outlining the key messages.

### Some of the main findings:

#### Compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty

Calderdale Council is firmly committed to the principle of equality of opportunity. We are committed to delivering services that meet the needs of all our diverse communities and ensuring fair and equitable access for all. We ensure we pay due regard to the public sector equality duty when making decisions about overarching policies, budget and general decisions which affect staff and customers.

Appendix A highlights some of the actions that have been taken to improve the lives of people in Calderdale, it also demonstrates how we have worked effectively with partners to achieve this.

The report demonstrates how during the Covid-19 pandemic:

- We have used equality analysis to look at the higher level evidence and data on the impact across the protected characteristics and used this to inform the support, advice and resources that have been put in place to cover our response to emergency situations and in managing the effects of the pandemic in relation to employment and service delivery.
- We have protected the general public and the most vulnerable during the pandemic by increasing or realigning the capacity of our services to support those in most need
- We have maximised the impact of our work in localities through more collaborative working across our partners and with communities

**Examples of where we have given due regard and advanced equality of opportunity resulting in service improvements during the Covid-19 pandemic and the timeline of the report include:**

#### Customer First

From the start of the pandemic, Customer First have been working remotely but still supporting customers over the phone, via email and through Live Chat. In July 2020, they became responsible for the Covid helpline, assisting customers with a range of queries from financial hardship to help with self-isolating. Part of this service was triaging enquiries where support from partner agencies, voluntary sector or colleagues in Adult Health and Social Care was required. In January 2021, the team were central to the vaccine roll out in Calderdale, assisting clinically extremely vulnerable customers to book their vaccine online.

When lockdown allowed it, dedicated advisers were available in libraries to assist customers with a number of activities such as benefit and blue badge applications - over 600 customers received this support. As well as in-house Digital support, Customer First staff also signposted customers to the Digital Skills courses available through partner agencies. Customers continue to increasingly complete their transactions online with more customers than ever completing integrated e-forms when reporting issues or making an application. There have also been big increases in the number of customers who are signed up for paperless billing, customer account and collection day reminders.

### **Register Office**

Following the Register Office reopening after the first lockdown, registering a birth has been a very different experience for staff and customers alike. Previously parents would arrange an appointment to come to the office to provide information about their baby, and everything would be done face to face with them at that point. Now the Register Service is asking them to complete an online form, and then ringing them to check the details and take payment for any certificates. This means that the face to face part of the appointment is as short as possible, minimising contact for everyone involved.

As well as this being a safe and efficient way of doing things, feedback received from parents has been really positive. A lady registering her third baby, who had previous experience of the 'old way' of doing things said she found completing the online form prior to the appointment really helpful. It meant that she and her husband could consider the information they were giving carefully and check it was all correct. She had an unusual surname, which people often spelt incorrectly, so she was much more confident about getting this right. On coming to the office for the appointment she felt very safe and comfortable with the measures put in place. She also really appreciated the work prior to the appointment that kept her face-to-face contact to a minimum. Out of the three appointments she had had, she felt this was the best one.

### **Shibden Hall and the Museums Service**

Shibden Hall is home to the known lesbian Anne Lister (1791-1840) who detailed her life and relationships in her diaries. While Shibden Hall remained closed for Anne Lister's birthday for the second year running due to COVID-19, the Council's Museums Service released new content and films on social media over the Easter weekend. Resources on the website were shared and included a 3D virtual tour of Shibden, Anne Lister's diary entries for her birthday, a full biography of Anne and other resources to learn more about her extraordinary life. A new podcast by Calderdale Libraries with three episodes about Anne Lister and Shibden Hall was also promoted.

Reopening again on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021 in line with the government roadmap and guidelines the service continues to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all visitors. As part of this new gates and CCTV has been installed to enhance security for the buildings and visitors. CAFM, Parks, Countryside and Community Wardens are working closely with museums to provide a great visitor experience all round. Improvements are being made to alternative access for disabled visitors including virtual tours of our sites accessible online.

### **Day Services**

The Council's Day Services team supports older people and adults with learning disabilities with complex needs in a day and community setting (such as day centre's) with activities, meals and personal care. Whilst these settings were temporarily closed

during the pandemic for safety reasons, support continued in new ways and staff carried out additional roles to help with the wider social care response to the pandemic.

This resulted in over 50 team members being flexible to change in relation to where they worked and what they did from one day to the next, depending on where the need was highest – including in residential and nursing homes, in the homelessness service and in the ground-breaking facility at Cedar Court Hotel in Halifax, where vulnerable people whose usual care had been disrupted could stay and take part in a range of activities.

### **Calderdale BAME Covid-19 Action Plan**

In April 2020, the Calderdale BAME Covid-19 Action Plan was created through various conversations with community members and groups, to understand the impact and the needs of the BAME communities throughout the pandemic. Actions to address inequality and further equitable outcomes have been agreed and are being progressed.

### **As an employer we are committed to being fair and inclusive. We have gathered a wide range of employment information and the main findings are:**

- As of 31 March 2020, the workforce profile of Calderdale Council consisted of 2694 employees of whom 892 (33%) were male and 1802 (67%) were female. 42 % of female employees and 8.5% of male employees work part time hours.
- Since 2015, as a consequence of budgetary pressures and smarter ways of working we have downsized our workforce which has resulted in the decrease of both sexes, over the last year equates to a loss of 36 men and 65 women. The impact being greater for men than women when compared with the overall profile of the workforce.
- The majority of our employees are White British, female, Christian, do not have a disability and are aged between 45 to 54 years.
- The overall average full time equivalent (FTE) salary is £30,483.62 The average FTE salary for female employees is £31,040.68 and the male average is £29,718.19. The highest average salary (both females and male and female combined) occurs amongst staff who are Black (£29,740.36).
- 152 employees make up the top 5% of earners group. The average salary of the top 5% earners is £55,113.83 pa. The majority of top earners, 140 employees are from a White background, this in as increase of two from 2020. Nine (5.95%) employees are from a BAME background, this is a decrease of two BAME employees from 2020 (dropping from 7.1% in 2020). This highlights a trajectory going in the opposite direction to our objective to increase BAME representation in the top 5%. Five disabled employees are within the top earner group, which is positive increase of two employees from 2020.
- Disabled employees have increased from 128 to 132 with 4.9% declaring a disability. A higher percentage of internal applicants were shortlisted and successful in appointment in comparison to external applicants.

- The percentage of employees who are Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) has remained static, with an increase of only one employee since 2020. The proportion of Asian employees, who form the largest BAME employee group increased by eight employees overall from 170 employees to 178, the ethnicity declaration increasing from 96.78% to 98.03%.
- 16 employees hold an apprenticeship at Calderdale Council, two of whom have declared a disability. Sadly for the second year running we have been unsuccessful in recruiting any BAME apprentices.
- The declaration rate for disability has remained fairly static, increasing from 95.71% to 96.77%, however, the declaration rates of sexual orientation and religion have grown more significantly, increasing from 73.56% to 81.81% for sexual orientation and from 71.57% to 88.55% for religion.
- The mean gender pay gap at Calderdale is 1.5% (£0.22), and for the top 5% of earners this is 3.2%
- The median gender gap is -4.1% and for the top 5% of earners this is 0.0%.
- The mean ethnicity pay gap is 2.1%. The mean ethnicity pay gap for males is 6.2% and for females is -0.6%.
- There has been a significant increase in the median ethnicity pay gap from -3.6% to -9.4%. The median ethnicity pay gap for males is -2% (-£0.26) and the median ethnicity pay gap for females is -8.3% (-£1.07)