



## ITEM NO: 8

<b>Report to :</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE CABINET</b>
<b>Date :</b>	26 August 2015
<b>Executive Member / Reporting Officers:</b>	Cllr Brenda Warrington – Executive Member – Adult Social Care and Wellbeing Sandra Stewart – Executive Director (Governance & Resources)
<b>Subject :</b>	<b>CORPORATE EQUALITY SCHEME 2015-19</b>
<b>Report Summary :</b>	This report provides information on the Council's Corporate Equality Scheme 2015-19. This is the second scheme since the introduction of the Equality Act 2010 and builds upon the work and actions undertaken during the course of the previous Corporate Equality Scheme 2011-15.
<b>Recommendations :</b>	It is recommended that Executive Cabinet review and agree the content of the Corporate Equality Scheme 2015-19.
<b>Links to Community Strategy :</b>	Equality and diversity work is relevant to the vision provided in the Corporate Plan and all Community Strategy themes.
<b>Policy Implications :</b>	The issues highlighted in the report directly relate to meeting the requirements set out in the Equality Act 2010, and aid compliance with legislative and performance management frameworks.
<b>Financial Implications : (Authorised by the Section 151 Officer)</b>	There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.
<b>Legal Implications : (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)</b>	Tameside's Corporate Equality Scheme (CES) 2015-19 is the second scheme since the introduction of the Equality Act 2010, which details how we fulfil our legal obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty. This builds on the achievements and developments made since the introduction of the first Corporate Equality Scheme (2011-15) which was produced following the Equality Act 2010 becoming law.
<b>Risk Management :</b>	This report fulfils the commitment for equalities issues to be monitored on a regular basis by Executive Board. It also ensures awareness of the agenda across the organisation.
<b>Access to Information :</b>	The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer Jody Stewart:  Telephone: 0161 342 3170  e-mail: <a href="mailto:jody.stewart@tameside.gov.uk">jody.stewart@tameside.gov.uk</a>

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This report provides the Executive Board with details of the draft Corporate Equality Scheme (CES) 2015-19 and its development within the context of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of the Equality Act 2010. The report is structured as follows;

1. Background & Legislation
2. Corporate Equality Scheme (CES) 2015-19 Approach & Content
3. Recommendations

## **2.0 BACKGROUND & LEGISLATION**

2.1 Tameside's Corporate Equality Scheme (CES) 2015-19 is the second scheme since the introduction of the Equality Act 2010 which details how we fulfil our legal obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty. This builds on the achievements and developments made since the introduction of the first Corporate Equality Scheme 2011-15 which was produced following the Equality Act 2010 becoming law.

2.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty is laid out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It came into force on 5th April 2011, and it states that a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:-

- a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act;
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it;
- c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it

2.3 The Equality Act (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 stated that by January 2012, and annually thereafter, we must publish information to demonstrate compliance with the general duty, including information about the protected characteristic status of employees, and other persons affected by our policies and practices. By April 2012, we were required to publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives, and subsequently at intervals of no more than four years from the date of first publication.

2.4 Our first Corporate Equality Scheme was published in September 2011. Annual progress updates have since been produced to inform our understanding of how we are performing, and assist us in developing ways in which to better evidence our objectives. In line with the requirements of the Act, we have now revised our equality objectives and the scheme which are set out in the updated Corporate Equality Scheme 2015-19. This fulfils our obligation to publish our objectives at intervals of no more than four years from the date of first publication.

## **3.0 CORPORATE EQUALITY SCHEME (CES) 2015-19 APPROACH & CONTENT**

3.1 The Corporate Equality Scheme (CES) 2015-19 consists of three parts, and is attached at **Appendix A:**

- Part 1 outlines our approach to the equality and diversity agenda, our achievements to date, and introduces the overarching themes of our forward looking equality objectives for 2015-19.
- Part 2 contains our objectives and explains the five high level themes under which they are headed;
- Part 3 summarises the legislative context of the Scheme, and provides further more detailed information on the Equality Act 2010 and the public sector equality duty.

3.2 The five thematic areas under which the equality objectives sit in the Corporate Equality Scheme (CES) 2015-19 are:

- Reduce Inequalities and Improve Outcomes
- Meeting our obligations under the Equality Act 2010
- Equality Training, Development and Awareness
- Consultation and Engagement
- Information, Intelligence & Need – Understanding Service Use & Access

3.3 The objectives are designed to allow services to demonstrate consideration of equality issues within their work areas, and show regard to, and compliance with, the public sector equality duty in a way that is complementary to existing strategies and frameworks.

#### **4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 As set out on the front of the report.

# Corporate Equality Scheme 2015-19



Pupils at the opening of Flowerly Field Primary School, Hyde

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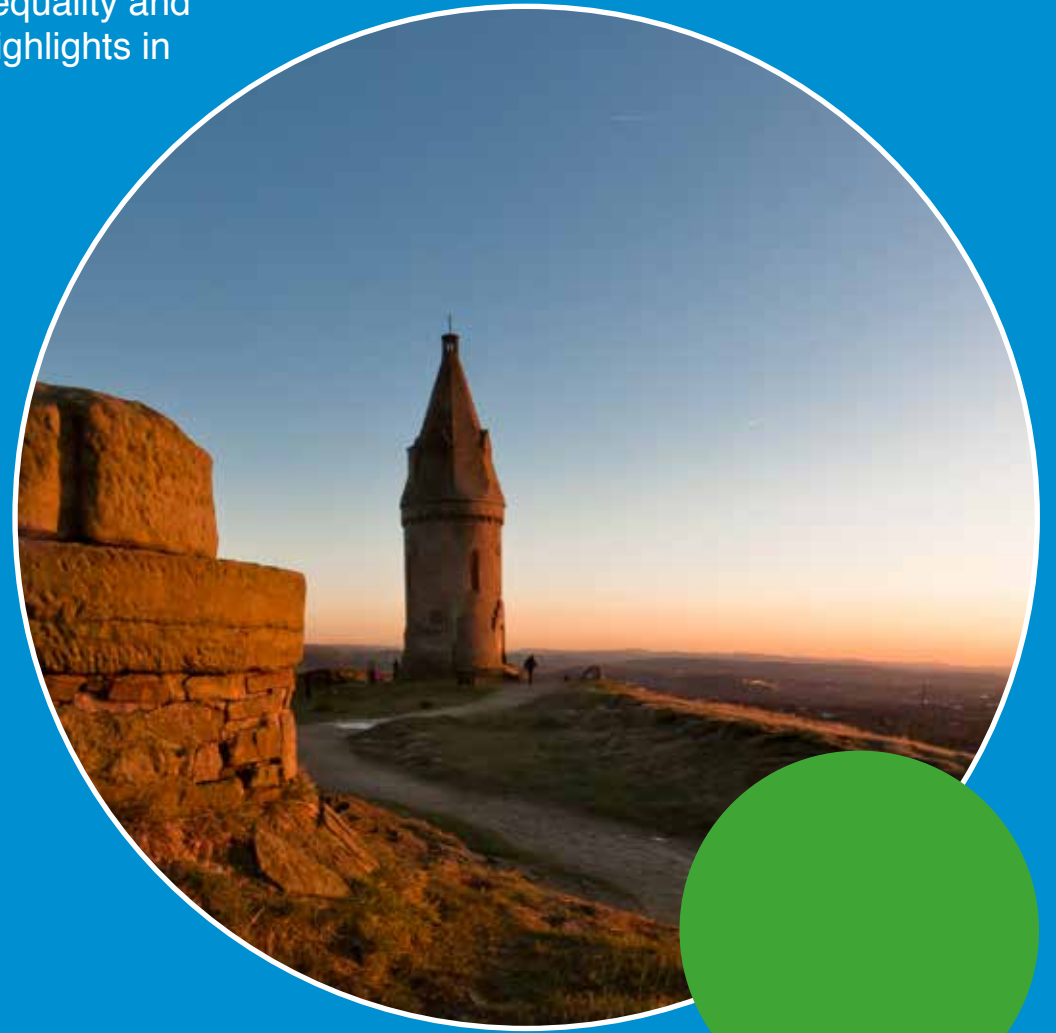
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# Part 1: Our Approach and Achievements

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Details of how Tameside Council approaches and manages the equality and diversity agenda, together with some of our achievements and highlights in this area





## Introduction

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Welcome to our forward looking Corporate Equality Scheme (CES) 2015-19. This Scheme, our second since the introduction of the Equality Act 2010, builds upon the work and actions undertaken during the course of the previous scheme (CES 2011-15), and highlights how we will be taking forward our commitment to equality and diversity in the coming years.

The Scheme is divided into three separate yet complementary sections.

This section, Part 1, outlines our approach to equality and diversity, some of our achievements to date, and introduces the overarching themes of our forward looking equality objectives for 2015-19.

Part 2 provides a more detailed look at our overarching themes, by breaking each down into a number of objectives that we will be working towards achieving over the course of the scheme. These objectives will help us fulfil our obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and specific duties, as well as complementing our other strategic aims and the vision of the Corporate Plan.

Part 3 provides details of the legislative context to the Scheme, detailing how we are complying with the Equality Act 2010 and the PSED. It also provides more general background information on equality law, and signposts where further information can be found.

We hope you find these documents useful and informative.



## Background to Tameside

Tameside lies on the eastern edge of Greater Manchester, sharing borders with Manchester to the West, High Peak, Derbyshire to the East, Oldham to the North and Stockport to the South.

It consists of nine towns - Ashton-under-Lyne, Audenshaw, Denton, Droylsden, Dukinfield, Hyde, Longendale, Mossley and Stalybridge.

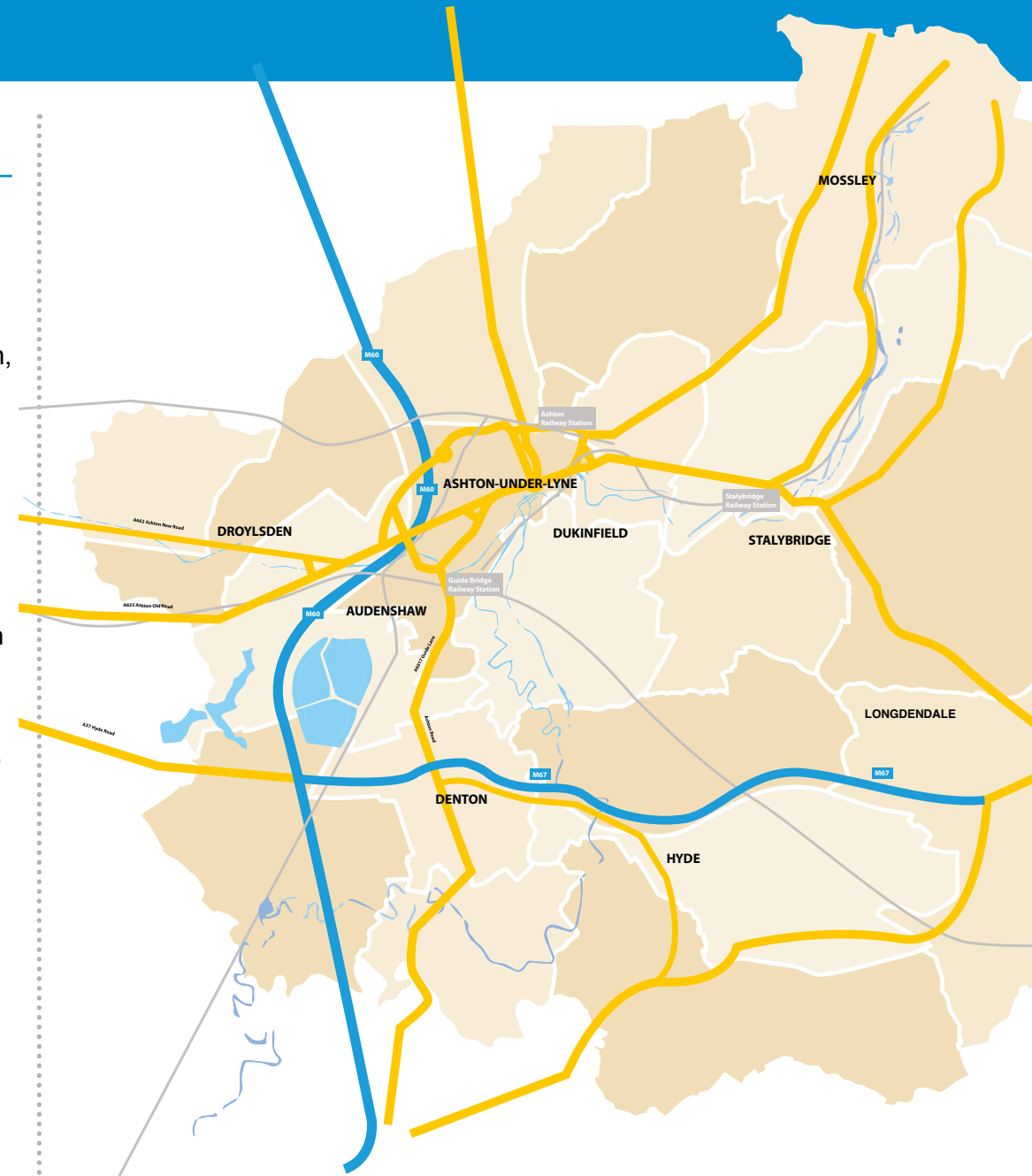
Covering an area of almost 40sq. miles, and combining a mix of urban and rural landscapes, it is home to approximately 220,800<sup>1</sup> people.

Our population is a fairly even split between male and female, with women comprising 50.8% of the population.

Almost a fifth (19.6%) of our population are children (under 16 years old), with slightly less (17.1%) being of pensionable age. The remaining 63.2% are of working age (16 to 64 years old).

Over the next 20 years, the age profile of our population is forecast to change dramatically, with a significant rise in the number of older people; residents aged 65 years plus are projected to increase by 64.9% by 2037 (from 37,000 to 61,000 residents in this age group).

The borough is also becoming increasingly diverse, with 9.1% of residents from black or minority ethnic groups, of which people of Asian and Asian British heritage make up the largest number.



<sup>1</sup> Office for National Statistics Mid Year Population Estimates 2014



## Part 1: Our Approach & Achievements

Reducing inequality and disadvantage is central to our work as a Council, and our approach to equality and diversity is to ensure that this ethos runs through everything we do. In this challenging economic climate, ensuring that we deliver fair and equitable services is more important than ever.

Last year we participated in the Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Challenge which focused on scrutinising how well we are delivering for the people of Tameside. An independent team from the LGA, led by Cllr Peter Box (Leader Wakefield Council) and Tony Reeves (Chief Executive of City of Bradford Council), spent a week at the Council assessing our performance. Feedback from the assessment recognised the Council as “an organisation with ambition and a track record of taking tough decisions early which are leading to successful achievements”. The peer team also noted the Council’s sound approach to financial management, the strong political and managerial leadership, effective partnership working and the “proud, enthusiastic and energetic” frontline staff. They also found that the Council “has all the ingredients in place to make further progress on economic development and change the nature of public services”.

We have also recently been assessed as part of the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) standard. This aims to bring professional, high-level customer service concepts into common currency with every customer service by offering a unique improvement tool to help those delivering services put their customers at the core of what they do.

Despite the financial challenges we face, the CSE accreditation panel could see clear evidence of our continuing commitment to customer services and have awarded us 100% compliance across all the standards.

Following the full assessment we have been awarded eight areas of Compliance Plus, an increase on the six areas awarded at the time of last assessment and with five in new areas.

The areas awarded Compliance Plus clearly demonstrate how reducing inequality and disadvantage is at the heart of all we do. These areas are:

1. We make particular efforts to identify hard to reach and disadvantaged groups and individuals and have developed our services in response to their specific needs.
2. We have made positive changes to services as a result of analysing customer experience, including improved customer journeys
3. There is corporate commitment to putting the customer at the heart of service delivery and leaders in our organisation actively support this and advocate for customers.
4. We empower and encourage all employees to actively promote and participate in the customer focused culture of our organisation.
5. We can demonstrate how customer facing staffs’ insight and experience is incorporated into internal processes, policy development and service planning
6. We have made arrangements with other providers and partners to offer and supply coordinated services and these arrangements have demonstrable benefits for our customers
7. We have developed coordinated working arrangements with our partners that ensure customers have clear lines of accountability for quality of service
8. We interact within wider communities and we can demonstrate the ways in which we support those communities.

We aim to ensure that reducing inequality and disadvantage remains central to our work going forward, and this document outlines how we intend to achieve this through strong corporate ownership, effective partnership working, and above all, through listening to the needs of our diverse communities and responding accordingly.

The Corporate Plan sets out our vision, our top priorities, and our aim to deliver excellence to the people and businesses of Tameside. We are committed to maximising the wellbeing of local people, supporting economic growth, increasing the self-sufficiency of individuals and families, and protecting the most vulnerable.

Everything we do aims to make our vision a reality by focusing our resource on what matters. Our core purpose and values put people at the forefront of services to ensure that every decision we make supports economic growth and self-sufficiency. We will work with residents to do this by asking them to take on greater responsibility in their families, communities and area, supporting them when they need help.

In order to deliver against our vision and priorities the Council has a programme of key projects in place. These include:

- Tameside Enterprise Scheme
- Digital by Design
- Vision Tameside
- Early Years
- Care Together
- Wellness Offer
- Early Help
- Greening Tameside
- Transport connectivity
- Working Differently.

Some of the projects will be delivered in the short-term as part of the plans to make the £38 million savings required over the next two years. Other projects are more long-term and involve significant changes in the way the Council delivers services and works together with the community to grow Tameside. All of these projects will work in some way towards reducing inequality and disadvantage within the borough.

The CES 2015-19 provides the framework of how we manage our approach to equality and diversity, and details the processes, policies and actions that we have either already implemented, or intend to implement, and the outcomes we are seeking to achieve.

We recognise that equality and diversity goes beyond the nine 'protected characteristic' groups and the legal protection the law offers. In many cases, there are reasons beyond a person's race or gender or disability for example, which results in them having less opportunity or unequal access to services.

Inequality can exist as a result of an individual's socio-economic circumstances, or simply through their status as a vulnerable person in need of assistance.

Our CES 2015-19 takes a holistic approach to the equality and diversity agenda. It outlines the many ways in which we are seeking to identify and tackle the inequalities that exist within Tameside, as well as supporting those measures and actions which are making a valuable difference to the quality of people's lives.

This CES 2015-19 is not a standalone strategy. Whilst it focuses on equality in the legal sense, it also focuses on the wider and broader definitions of equality, to include vulnerability, and the focus on reducing inequality as a whole. It is based on best practice, and not simply minimum legal compliance.

Part 1 of the Scheme outlines both our:

- Approach to Equality and Diversity; and;
- Our Achievements

This section details how we manage our obligations under the law and put appropriate measures in place to ensure that our services are provided in a way that meets the needs of our customers. It also highlights some of the good work we are already doing in the Borough across a range of service areas and equality groups. Although our achievements demonstrate the depth and breadth of the work we undertake to reduce inequality and disadvantage, this document is not intended as an exhaustive list of case studies or performance measures.

This information is set out under the five key themes identified for taking forward the equality and diversity agenda. These themes were first outlined in the CES 2011-15 and were developed following analysis of key issues from various consultation and engagement projects, information taken from our other key strategic documents and plans, together with considering our legal requirements and resource considerations. As these still remain the key issues for the Borough, we have decided to retain the same key themes for our second CES.

The themes are:

- Reducing Inequalities & Improving Outcomes
- Meeting our obligations under the Equality Act 2010
- Equality Training, Development and Awareness
- Consultation & Engagement
- Information, Intelligence & Need - Understanding Service Use & Access



## Reducing Inequalities & Improving Outcomes

The need to reduce inequality and improve outcomes for our residents is embedded in everything that we do. Our Corporate Plan clearly sets out how we want residents to have the best possible opportunities to live healthy and fulfilling lives by focusing our resources on:

- Working with families to ensure children are ready for school;
- Supporting families to care for their children safely;
- Increasing educational attainment and skills levels;
- Working with businesses to create economic opportunities for residents;
- Reducing levels of benefit dependency;
- Helping people to live independent lifestyles supported by responsible communities;
- Improving health and wellbeing of residents;
- Protecting the most vulnerable.

We believe Tameside is a great place to live and work and we will strive to make it even better by focusing on:

- Strengthening the local business community and our town centres;
- Improving transport infrastructure and digital connectivity;
- Growing levels of inward investment;

- Promoting cleaner, greener and safer neighbourhoods;
- Improving housing choice;
- Reducing our carbon footprint, both in energy and waste;
- Supporting a cultural offer that attracts people to the borough.

A range of services exist within the Council which help to achieve these aims. Examples of such services and some of the initiatives they undertake are set out below.

Our Customer Services and Welfare Rights Service ensure that residents are able to access the services they require, and also highlight other services available to them that they may otherwise have been unaware of. Enquiries can range in complexity from something as simple as a missed bin enquiry to supporting a resident with debt management advice.

During 2014 -2015, Customer Services assisted 43,325 customers; our call centre answered 165,369 calls; whilst our Welfare Rights service assisted residents with income gains of £3.6 million and assisted residents with an aggregate £2.8 million of debt to negotiate affordable repayments.

Customer Service Centres are located around the Borough in buildings which are accessible to all, whilst a home visiting service operates for those who cannot attend a Centre. There are language speakers within the service who speak Urdu, Hindi, Gujarati and Punjabi and can assist customers whose first language is not English. In addition, Language Line, a telephone interpreting service is available. A loop hearing system is available in the Customer Service Centres.

Customer satisfaction surveys are undertaken in Customer Services throughout the year. These surveys consistently show a high level of satisfaction with the advice given and wait time. The results can be disaggregated by some of the groups with a protected characteristic.

Recent funding has enabled Welfare Rights to deliver benefits and debt advice in GP surgeries. It is widely evidenced that having insufficient money to lead a healthy life is a significant cause of health inequalities. The poorest people often live the shortest lives with the worst health.

This project has initially been trialled in three GP surgeries in the borough. Often GP's are a point of contact where a person will present with health issues, sometimes exacerbated by financial difficulties, not knowing where to turn to. This project delivers advice directly to patients in their GP surgery.

Since January 2015, 94 cases have been dealt with. A total of £92,745 has been generated in benefit gains for these clients. £21,880 debt has also been dealt with.

The majority of patients report that it was a very positive experience being seen at the GP surgery. Most said that ease of access and familiarity was the main factor. One resident stated, "I was very grateful for the help I received. I just could not have done it myself due to my disability".

As a consequence of getting advice through the surgery, this has resulted in 94% feeling less anxious, 81% feeling less depressed and 94% report that their emotional and/or mental health has improved as a result of getting advice.

In addition, Welfare Rights have provided a service at Tameside Hospital's Mental Health Unit for many years. It is recognised that people with mental health are some of our most vulnerable and disadvantaged residents. It is difficult for patients on the mental health unit to access advice services, especially if they are very unwell or detained under the Mental Health Act. The welfare rights service understands this and provides casework support directly on the wards. The priority for this work is to ensure that people's benefits are assessed on admission and in payment for their discharge.

Patients are referred by members of nursing staff and the worker sees patients on the hospital wards at an appropriate time. The worker assists with claims for benefits, ensuring that the relevant benefit departments have been advised of the person's admission into hospital.

The worker also ensures that any housing benefit issues are addressed and where there is any risk of homelessness that these cases are referred to the Council's debt advice team.

In 2014, 110 patients accessed the service and £474,415 was gained in extra benefits.

Improving the health and wellbeing of our residents is a key priority in Tameside. Although health outcomes in the borough remain poor when compared to the England averages, there has been some improvement over the last year.

Healthy life expectancy for males is currently 57.9 years and for females is 58.6 years. This is 5.4 years below the England average for males and 5.3 years for females (2011/13). Over the last 10 years, premature deaths from cancer (173.3 per 100,000), and heart disease and stroke (121.2 per 100,000) have fallen, but still remain significantly worse than the England average. (144.4 and 78.2 respectively) (2011/13).

However, improvements in premature mortality have started to slow and some conditions have actually started to decline. For example there has been an increase over the last five years in premature mortality relating to alcoholic liver disease in Tameside (18.8 per 100,000 for Tameside compared to 8.7 per 100,000 for England)

The main cause for concern is that the gap between Tameside and England in overall life expectancy is not decreasing at the pace we would like. In particular for females the gap between Tameside and England as widened by 32%.

Since 1 April 2013, local authorities have been responsible for improving the health of their local population and for public health services including most sexual health services and services aimed at reducing drug and alcohol misuse. The following are just some examples of initiatives to address health and wellbeing issues in Tameside:



## Pregnancy & Smoking

Tameside Public Health currently fund the local stop smoking service with advisors who specialise in supporting women during pregnancy. A pilot Midwife-led Stop Smoking Service from Tameside Hospital Maternity Unit has also been funded. This service provides additional support to mothers who want to stop smoking, but did not take up support from the local Stop Smoking Service. An evaluation has demonstrated the effectiveness of the service and it will continue for the foreseeable future.

## Sexual Health - Black and Minority Ethnicity Residents (BME)

Of heterosexual transmissions of HIV in Tameside and Greater Manchester, the population group most affected are black African residents. The Black Health Agency is funded by the majority of GM authorities, including Tameside, to communicate safer sex information within appropriate settings and directly with our residents.

## Teens and Toddlers

Teens and Toddlers are a national charity that aims to target young people (aged 14-15) who are identified as 'at risk' of becoming a teenage parent and/or Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and to deliver a programme designed to help support these vulnerable young people. Teens and Toddlers aims to raise the young people's aspirations, self-esteem, resilience and sense of responsibility, so they can make informed positive decisions about their education, their health and their future.

The Teens and Toddlers programme enables young people to work with toddlers (normally within a nursery setting), giving them a sense of responsibility and thus raising their self-esteem. Alongside this, the young people have one-to-one support and group sessions to gain an understanding of behaviours and decisions.

The programme also benefits the smaller child as the young person supports the learning of the younger child with specific skills in order to improve their cognitive and emotional development, resulting in the smaller child's readiness for school.



Access to skills, training and employment opportunities are pivotal in ensuring we can improve the quality of life for residents.

Slightly more than four out of every five Tameside Primary Schools are now rated by Ofsted as either 'Good' or 'Outstanding'. Over half of our Secondary Schools & Academies are rated as either 'Good' or 'Outstanding' too.

Tameside is currently below the national averages for both the proportion of Primary school pupils (79.5% compared to 84%) and Secondary school pupils (49% compared to 76.9%) attending a 'Good' or 'Outstanding' school.

In 2014, 53.7% of children in Tameside achieved 5 A\*-C GCSEs including English and Maths, in line the national average for all schools of 53.4%.

At Key Stage 2, 80% of Tameside pupils achieve Level 4 or above in 'Reading, Writing & Mathematics', in line with both the North West (79%), and England (78%) averages.

The Tameside rate for those aged 16-24 who are 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' (NEET) continues to fall from 4.2% in May 2014 to 3.3% in May 2015. This is lower than the England average of 4.8%.

The Council continues to operate the Apprentice Company sharing capacity and risk with local businesses who are offering apprenticeships. For young people who may lose their placement due to unforeseen circumstances, the scheme will support them into a new opportunity for a period of 4 weeks.

We have renewed our target of 100 apprenticeships across the Council, New Charter Trust Group and Tameside College and will also engage local businesses. We have successfully achieved this target in previous years and plan to continue delivering opportunities to young people across the Borough.

We are also delivering the Tameside Youth Employment Scheme, (linked with 'Jobs with Training') which will provide young people with 6 months paid employment or work related experience. This scheme will target those aged 16-24 years old and give them the tools to achieve sustainable employment,

therefore reducing unemployment, improving skills and increasing aspirations of young people throughout the Borough.

A package of measures to promote jobs, training and investment were launched at the Tameside Business Summit on 18 March 2015. Five of the 15 for 15 'A Vision for Tameside' pledges relate to training and investment;

- The Youth Jobs Pledge looks to provide a minimum of six months paid employment for those aged 16 and not in employment, education or training and are living in Tameside.
- The Enterprise grants offer businesses up to £1500 for creating jobs, apprenticeships and traineeships.
- The Trade grants, of up to £1000, are available to help young people and apprentices get kitted out – be it with the appropriate equipment, tools or clothing – for work.
- To support the long term unemployed back in to work, Tameside Council will provide free travel for up to 6 months to help people get to and from work.
- To offer help to veterans in the form of a six month employment opportunity or work placement with ongoing training and transition support.



Our Libraries continue to support jobseekers by offering free access to the internet and IT facilities. Library members receive up to one hours free internet access, and jobseekers are eligible for additional time where capacity allows. Libraries host eight National Careers Service (NCS) one to one advice sessions a week across the network, providing CV development support, searching and applying for jobs, finding funding support, and identifying career options. NCS also run three weekly Work Clubs at Tameside Central and Droylsden Library.

Libraries provide book stock on topics ranging from setting up your own business to interview techniques; and provide access to job adverts in papers, magazines and via the internet. Our libraries are used by many agencies as a venue to meet clients on a one-to-one basis, such as 'Routes to Work'. We have a long and successful partnership with The Work Company (formerly Work Solutions), who have commented positively that our libraries are an excellent venue, combining the benefits of a community venue, facilities for both themselves and their clients to use, and helpful staff. Many of their clients go on to become independent users of the library service, using the facilities and services we offer to continue with their job seeking and skills development. The model of partnership working which has developed in Tameside is quoted as an example of good practice by The Work Company in the region.

All Tameside Libraries have collections of books for adults who are studying to improve their English. Collections are called OK4U (entry level books) and RAW (level 1-2 books), and include the Quick Reads series, mainstream books that have had their readability SMOG tested, and material for people learning English as a second language.

Tameside Libraries hosted a programme of free events for Adult Learners' Week, from 13 to 19 June 2015. Adult Learners' Week is a national celebration of lifelong learning, first held in 1991. Events organised included chess for beginners, cake decorating, researching your family tree, sign language taster session, healthy minds workshop, armchair exercises and a creative writing workshop.

The Libraries Service offers class visits to schools to support the curriculum at all ages from Early Years to Key Stage 4.

Early Years visits involve active learning, creativity and new experiences for children. Key Stage 1 visits develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding, integrating work in speaking and listening, reading and writing.

Key Stage 2 visits develop knowledge and understanding, encouraging children to read a wide range of materials enthusiastically and independently for enjoyment and to develop skills in information handling through investigation, selection and evaluation. Key Stage 3 and 4 visits offer a library induction and tour of the facilities.

During 2014-15, 135 class visits were made to libraries, with 3,579 child participants and 628 adults, whilst the library service made 22 visits to schools, with 496 children taking part in these visits and 45 adults. The service also attended 56 assemblies across schools in the Borough.

To encourage less confident readers to improve their literacy skills the Library service participates in The Reading Agency's Six Book Challenge scheme. They have worked in partnership with Tameside College, Ashton Sixth Form College, and Tameside Adult and Community Education to deliver the challenge. To encourage library use and participation in the Six Book Challenge class visits are offered to learners on skills for life courses that are based on the adult literacy core curriculum. We have been successful in gaining a Reading Agency silver award for achieving over 100 finishers in 2015.

The library also runs 'learning for pleasure' and computer courses to encourage lifelong learning. These are provided in partnership with the Workers Educational Association and Tameside Adult and Community Education.

'Bookstart' and 'Time for a Rhyme' offers children and parents an accessible and important resource in developing early reading skills. The Tameside 'Bookstart' project is part of a national scheme that encourages young children to share books with a parent or carer, through the gifting of books at three stages in the child's development. Library staff run weekly 'Time for a Rhyme' sessions in all libraries for parents/carers and children aged 0-4 years old. Both help children with their personal, social and emotional development. Through work with Children's Centres the second 'Bookstart' pack is gifted to targeted children. In 2014-15 Bookstart has reached 6255 of eligible children in the borough gaining praise from the schemes national organisers, Book Trust.

The Health & Wellbeing Service continues to support carers and vulnerable adults who currently fall below the threshold for services.

The Service provides Early Intervention Assessments which are available to vulnerable adults, and Carers Assessments, available to their carers, which help people maintain independence in their own homes. A range of information, advice and support services, with the opportunity for Wellbeing Advisors to refer people to services they may not be aware of, means that people are signposted earlier and therefore supported in their homes and communities.

The Service supported Carers Week, which ran from 15 June 2015 and is an annual campaign designed to raise awareness of caring and highlight the challenges carers face. There are an estimated 24,000 Carers in Tameside, an increase on figures from previous years, but only around 4,000 are known to Tameside Carers' Centre. Those who are not known could be missing out on help, advice and support to which they are entitled.

In certain circumstances, the Community Engagement and Market Development Team have provided grant funding to community groups to help expand and develop. In 2014/15, the Team was able to provide small amounts of funding to groups such as the Grafton Centre in Hyde to purchase new equipment, as well as larger organisations such as 'Age UK Tameside' to deliver a Community Support Service to support older people with such things as help coming home from hospital, befriending and buddying.

The aim is to support community groups and organisations to thrive, develop and become sustainable, informed, skilled and connected within their communities, thereby building social capital and community capacity, whilst improving health and wellbeing.

Where the Team is not able to provide funding, it can put groups in touch with other organisations who can support them, such as CVAT (Community & Voluntary Action Tameside). As the leading support and development agency for voluntary, community and faith groups in Tameside, CVAT's overarching mission is to build and support a strong and vibrant voluntary and community sector in Tameside. They aim to do this through the provision of development services, (grass roots support to groups to set up, run effectively and access funding and development support), Partnerships Service offering groups and local partners the opportunity to make connections and have influence; and volunteer support services, offering support to individuals and those organisations involving volunteers.

As well as direct dedicated support to over 150 Voluntary, Community and Faith Organisations (VCFO) per year, CVAT also has a key role in helping disseminate grant funding to VCFOs, working in partnership with Tameside Council.

Through their funding advice service and grant management they have helped VCFOs access £558,714 in funding to help deliver services to meet local needs in the Borough.

The effects of the economic downturn are still being experienced by many residents, with households being left financially at risk. Further planned changes to the welfare system will also have an impact on those who are most vulnerable, making it more important than ever to have mechanisms in place to help support them.

As pressure on household budgets is increasing many people are turning to Pay-Day Loan companies for short term loans. Whilst accessing money from these companies is quick and simple to do, in many cases it leads to higher levels of debt.





## My Home Finance

We have invested £100,000 in to “My Home Finance”, a non-profit company set up by the National Housing Federation and already in use by New Charter Housing for their tenants. This will help to provide wider Tameside residents with a more affordable alternative to Pay Day Loan companies.

Tenants can borrow as little as £50 to £300 initially (this can increase where subsequent loans are then taken on) which is repayable over a period suitable to the tenant but typically within a 12 month period.

Any interest received over and above what would normally be achieved from investing £100,000 through normal investment channels will be re-invested to encourage and support borrowers to begin saving through the Cashbox Credit Union.

This would be achieved by introducing a pound for pound matching scheme where a pound saved in the Credit Union by the borrower during the term of the loan repayment would be matched by a pound funded through interest received from the investment.

Both My Home Finance and Cash Box Credit Union are designed to encourage and support people into more affordable and sustainable financial arrangements. We have also banned access to pay day loan sites from all Council PCs, including those in libraries, and with our partners, have recently signed up to the Stop Loan Sharks Charter.



## Cash Box Credit Union

Founded in 2004, Cash Box is a mutual financial service for everyone in Tameside. Locally delivered and ethically focused it offers straightforward savings and low interest loans across the Borough.

Membership costs £2 and savings can start from as little as £1 per week. It is a community savings and loan co-operative, where members pool their savings to lend to one another and help to run the credit union.

Membership currently stands at 4,580 adult members and 216 junior members. Members can save by standing order, salary deduction, or via one of the collection points in Ashton, Hyde, Denton, Mossley and Brushes Estate (Stalybridge). Total member deposits are presently £1,410,728 and £909,876 is on loan to members. Around 55 loan applications are processed each month and the average loan size is £1,000.





We know that crime, worklessness, substance misuse, school behaviour and health problems are issues which blight some residents' lives, they also disproportionately impact on the public purse. To tackle this we need to intervene early to prevent issues escalating.

We have developed a multi-agency HUB where agencies share information to build an intelligent picture of a family's needs. Experience, skills and knowledge from a range of professional backgrounds are brought together in joint decision making and leading whole system integration across public services in Tameside. Our Early Help team works with individuals or families facing a complex problem as soon as possible in an effort to provide issues escalating, whilst also addressing other areas where they may need support.

As of February 2015, 98% of Tameside families identified as part of the Troubled Families programme in 2012 have now been 'turned around' (96% across Greater Manchester overall).

The Working Well pilot is supporting 5,000 Greater Manchester residents towards sustained employment. GM is one year into the pilot and in recent months has agreed an expansion of the programme with Government to 50,000 residents.

Employment Support Allowance claimants in the Work Related Activity Group are supported into sustained employment through a key worker model following their completion of the Work Programme.

From the 1,993 clients attached to Working Well across Greater Manchester the largest age group is the 45-54 cohort (33%), the majority are male (56%) with over 85% white British. 60% have no dependent children and almost 80% are single. Tameside has the highest number of clients in rented accommodation and has more females than males engaged compared with the majority of GM. Half of those on the cohort have not worked in 7 years.

There have been 54 job starts across Greater Manchester. The most recent job starts figure in Tameside is five (June 2015). Working Well clients have been employed in a variety of roles including administration and service, sales and skilled construction and building trades.



Neighbourhood Services comprises of four Neighbourhood Teams; North, South, East and West; and an Integrated Youth Service. These teams are responsible for a number of activities within their geographical area including, Environmental Enforcement and Community Safety. The teams also work with communities to support them to be stronger more vibrant communities which are more self-sufficient. By working with key partner organisations they look to provide an integrated approach to service delivery and tackling key priorities in our neighbourhoods. Their position within the community ensures Neighbourhood Teams are well placed to directly support our aim to reduce inequality and improve outcomes.

Examples of Neighbourhood Team led projects which have impact on the equality and diversity agenda include:

### Reducing Re-offending

The North Neighbourhood team led a project with low level offenders to reduce re-offending, increase skills and employability and address personal wellbeing.

The aim of the project was to develop a multi-agency drop in service for low level offenders currently managed through the probation service, to help break the cycle of behaviour and to prevent re-offending, before more expensive interventions and management systems are required.

This project was initially set up for 6 months, developed between Thameside Council North Neighbourhood Team and the Probation Service. The drop-in sessions were held on a weekly basis. It allowed users to “sign in” with probation and to have an opportunity to engage with various agencies for support and assistance on issues including housing, debt and benefit advice, health improvement, sexual health, drugs and alcohol dependency, personal aspirations and wellbeing.

Individuals were able to progress into education, volunteering and/or employment as well as sign up to basic skills courses or pre-employment training. Thameside College provided information on apprenticeships for those under 24 years of age. Advice and support with job searches, CV writing and volunteering programmes were also offered.

### Stalybridge Volunteer Pod

Officers from the East Neighbourhood team recently worked in partnership with Stalybridge Town Team and Tesco to set up a volunteer pod. The pod is used to store tools and equipment that is accessed by around 80 volunteers from several organisations including: Stalybridge Town Team, Greystones, Grosvenor House and the Canal & River Trust.

Greystones and Grosvenor House both cater for adults recovering from addictions that have prevented them from sustaining independent living. The two groups use the pod to deliver a range of skills around gardening and their latest project is a ‘grow to eat’ initiative on land handed over by Tesco. Both groups also support local traders by assisting with their entry into North West in Bloom, which is part of a wider scheme to encourage residents to shop locally, increasing footfall and reinvigorating Stalybridge town centre.

### Ridge Hill Women’s Group

Silver Springs School hosts weekly meetings of the Ridge Hill women’s group. The group is made up of local residents of all ages, most are unemployed and are signposted to the group by Probation Services, who run the club.

The club is used to provide help and advice on various topics including; debt, CV writing and health and wellbeing issues. The group also delivers practical skills, such as cookery, as well as leisure activities, like photography.

## Get Up & Go Bags

Three members of the East Neighbourhood team received training on the 'Get Up & Go Bags' procedures. The scheme offers assistance to victims of domestic violence by providing them with a safe location to build up the contents of a bag that can be accessed at any time of the day or night should they need to escape a violent partner. The scheme is supported by several partner organisations, including; Bridges, GM Fire & Rescue Service and New Charter. Items stored in 'Get Up & Go Bags' would be relevant to a particular person and could include items such as personal documentation, cash and a mobile phone.

## Home Watch Dementia Pilot

The Home Watch Dementia Pilot is a scheme where neighbourhoods are able to look out for and protect vulnerable adults. Home Watch residents are asked to provide details of any vulnerable adults on their street, such as those with Dementia, to the Community Response Service. Co-ordinators and volunteers assist in a search for any of these adults who go missing. Once reported, the Community Response service will check databases to see if the vulnerable person is registered. If the individual is not recorded, however is considered to be vulnerable, then a referral will be made by Community Response Service to Tameside Health and Well Being Service.

The information held on the Carer's Card database is to be extended to enable vulnerable persons without a carer to have their information recorded on the system.

Staff and volunteers will be trained to record key information to assist in locating the vulnerable persons should they go missing.

## Hattersley Snow Patrol

South Neighbourhood services alongside Public Health, Peak Valley Housing Association, Pennine Care, Mancunian Reunion and local residents collaborated together to deliver a "Snow Patrol", a project to help older and vulnerable people in severe snowy weather.

They deliver a service contacting residents to see if they need help, clearing snow from footpaths, collecting shopping, sorting out prescriptions, helping to report heating issues and any other problems that they may need support with.

The project provides unemployed residents the chance to learn and build on skills for their CV as well offering them new experiences that can lead to full time employment.



## Steps to Stay Safe Event – Droylsden Over 55's Phoenix Club

Droylsden's over 55s Phoenix Club won their bid to fund a doorstep crime and personal safety event, Steps to Stay Safe, for older residents who live in Droylsden. The aim of the day was to raise awareness amongst older adults who may be vulnerable or have been a victim of doorstep crime, giving them advice and tips on how to stay safe to improve their knowledge, wellbeing and welfare. The programme for the day was developed with the Phoenix Group and Partners; West Neighbourhood Team, Age UK, New Charter Housing Trust, Health Improvement and GM Fire Service, GMP and the Grafton Centre Drama Group.

The West Neighbourhood Team explained the Home Security Assessment process and packs available as well as promoting the NHS Message in a Bottle scheme, which advocates keeping personal and medical information in the event of an emergency in a bottle kept in the fridge. The Grafton Drama group acted out short crime scenes related to doorstep burglary crime and telephone crime.

This type of approach is proven to be more successful as visual displays can be more memorable, with one of the barriers to the safety of older adults being that they can be forgetful.

Greater Manchester Fire Service spoke about fire prevention and safety in relation to falls and oxygen safety and Age UK covered useful services available to older adults such as the Handy Man Service and Garden Maintenance Scheme.

## Weekly Partnership Meeting

Multi agency meetings take place in each ward on a weekly basis. Partners include the Council Neighbourhood teams, Police and Registered Social Landlords as the core group. Other services and agencies attend as required. The objective of the meeting is to problem solve local issues and reduce duplication with improved communication and shared information between key agencies. This set up allows a range of priorities surrounding crime, antisocial behaviour and environmental issues.

The meetings also focus on females in custody in an attempt to divert women, where possible, from appearing at court and into a positive intervention. This is done via a formal criminal justice disposal aimed at meeting female specific needs earlier and preventing further re-offending. Trained staff visit females in custody and an assessment is carried out using criteria such as education, health and finance.

We continue to work with vulnerable adults in a variety of ways. Two of our most successful and vital services are Greystones Ltd, a small, local private company contracted by the Council to provide specialist supported housing services for the vulnerable and socially excluded, and Adullam Homes who provide support, mentoring and coaching, for people who have experienced or who are at risk of homelessness.

Greystones Ltd continues to provide an outreach, day facilities and accommodation for some of our most vulnerable and excluded homeless men and women i.e. those who are experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping.

The support provided includes advice, information, and the use of practical facilities such as a shower, a laundry or a telephone. The service also provides four self-contained units with bed and shower facilities.

Adullam Homes provide support in the community for people who may be struggling to manage their home (any tenure), or who have experienced homelessness. The support is provided in 1:1 sessions and group work. Adullam provide opportunities for vulnerable people to become trained and accredited volunteers.

Bridges also provides integrated community services for people who are victims of domestic abuse such as an independent advocacy service, advice, support and access to community based agencies and help with housing. The service is funded by Tameside Council, led by New Charter Homes (Threshold), in a partnership with Turning Point and the Family Support Charity. The Bridges service brings together the council, police, victim support and other agencies and promotes early intervention and prevention alongside services for people who are victims of domestic abuse.

Following the Government's withdrawal of funding for schemes such as Tameside Support for Independent Living (TSIL), this has now been replaced by the Tameside Resettlement Scheme. The new scheme is for Tameside residents, aged 16 and over who are on a low income and who need help to move out of an institutional (hospital, prison, hostel) or unsettled way of life, including homelessness and who without help would suffer serious harm to themselves and / or their family.

The Early Help Team also works with families who are experiencing challenges and would like some support before issues escalate. In July 2014, the team implemented a group at the Children's Centre in Ashton, specifically for Young Parents aged 13 and over. Initially this was a 12 week project, looking at providing support for both parents and their children. Due to the success of the project it was agreed the session continues on a weekly basis as part of the Children's Centre Offer.





Tameside has a history of strong partnership working. We are always looking for ways to work in conjunction with partner organisations to improve how services are delivered for residents. This is particularly important in light of ever reducing public sector budgets.

Active Tameside have delivered a series of services and events that support a number of equality objectives in Tameside.

Their Adult Services provide day time provision for adults with learning disabilities or additional needs and provide a programme that includes: swimming, sport, life skills to develop independence through education in cooking, shopping, price comparison, menu planning and travel training, drama and arts and crafts. They support over 50 adults each week.

Active Tameside work in partnership with the Integrated Service for Children with Additional Needs (ISCAN), Our Kids Eyes (a local charity supporting children with special needs and their families), Tameside College and Tameside special schools to develop the community offer through sessions delivered for children with a disability and additional needs. Social workers and the ISCAN team are using these sessions as a way to reduce spend in the way of direct payments, local council payments for people who have been assessed as needing help from social services, and are purchasing a number of sports passes for parents to use as respite. The project has been shortlisted for the final of UK Active Flame awards, and North West Social Enterprise of the Year, due to the cost saving to the council of over £200,000.

Looked after children are provided with 12 free holiday activity places at Medlock , Copley and Denton each day for 12 weeks per year. They receive free community sport passes, individual swimming lessons, gym passes and trampoline places. This is in addition to delivering two, two hour sessions every week to over 100 young people.

Working with Denton Community College, Active Tameside has set up the Positive Pathways project. An initiative working with 12 year nine students at risk of exclusion to look at raising behavioural levels and their education attainment.

**ACTIVE**  
TAMESIDE



Active Tameside are also working with Parochial and Rose Hill Primary schools and have developed a creative curriculum for Year 4, aimed at working with 60 children per school to raise their team work and social development.

During school holidays, holiday camps are set up working with ten schools across the borough to deliver a range of activities, with over 500 attendances last year.

Active Tameside develop and deliver weekend youth provision of over 18 hours a weekend. In addition they deliver 40 hours of weekly sessions to young people across the Borough that are free to attend in partnership with Tameside Council and New Charter Homes. Community attendances for 2014-15 were in excess 25,000. They also provide coaches and sessional workers to support Veterans Day in Victoria Park, Tulip Sunday at Stamford Park, Safe4Summer and various other events organised through various agencies.

Create sessions have been delivered for 0-5 years olds across three sites to allow young parents the opportunity to access either gyms or group exercise sessions whilst children are in a safe environment with fully qualified staff. This is in addition to delivering five adventure play session across Medlock and Copley for 0-3 years that allow parents to come and interact with other parents and share issues. The sessions also invite professionals into the session to information share with parents.

Active Tameside are also delivering two weekly sessions of Dementia Café at Medlock Leisure Centre. Over 50 people attend these each week, equating to over 2500 attendances annually.

New Charter Homes also work towards reducing inequality and improving the outcomes of local residents. Examples of events which evidence this approach include Assheton House Community Get Together Day which was held in May 2015. With tenants from increasingly diverse backgrounds, it was recognised by the residents association that they wanted to encourage good neighbour relations by bringing people together to celebrate and embrace who

they are, despite any differences, no matter what race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, nationality or disability.

New Charter also held a number of events during Diversity Week (January 2015) including a two day event at the Silver Springs Academy. The school hosted a whole week of diversity awareness for students, parents and the wider community where they could learn about different countries and their customs and traditions.



## Meeting our Obligations under the Equality Act 2010

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The Equality Act 2010 came into force on 1 October 2010. It covers the basic framework of protection from discrimination, victimisation and harassment across the nine 'protected characteristic' groups.

The Public Sector Equality Duty, Section 149 of the Act, came into force the following year on 5 April 2011. The duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people when carrying out our activities.

Part 3 of the CES 2015-19 provides details of the legislative context to the Scheme, further information on some of the terms used by the Act, and some of the specific obligations placed on the Council and other public bodies in respect of publishing information.

The CES 2015-19, together with other strategic plans such as our Corporate Plan 2015-20, demonstrates how we are taking forward work to ensure we meet our responsibilities under this legislation.

Our original Corporate Equality Scheme was published in 2011, ensuring we satisfied the requirement of the Act to publish one or more achievable objectives by no later than 6 April 2012.

The Regulations of the Act state that we are required to review and republish our objectives at least every four years. Publishing this, our second version of the CES, fulfils this requirement. In addition, we are committed to providing yearly updates to our objectives.

Our workforce monitoring reports are published on the Council's website, and wherever possible provide a breakdown of our workforce by ethnicity, gender, age, and disability, across a number of areas – overall workforce, promotion, disciplinary action, grievances and those leaving the authority.

It also includes maternity leave applications and whether staff have returned to work following maternity leave, or left the organisation due to maternity related reasons.

In April 2015, 91.2% of our workforce identified themselves as being from a White background, whilst BME representation stood at 5.6%, an increase of 0.1% since 2013. The ethnic origin of employees unknown is 3.2%.

The percentage of the Council's workforce that is female has slightly decreased from 68.6% as of April 2013 to 67.9% as of April 2015. This compares to the higher percentage of 77.4% in 2009.

As at April 2015 the age range of our employee base varies, with the biggest percentage being in the age range of 50 years and over (41.2%). This has risen when compared with previous years - in 2013 35.4% of the workforce were aged 50+ and 33.3% in 2009. With regards to the age range 40 to 49, 2015 levels stand at 29.6%, showing a 3.7% reduction since 2013. In contrast 17.1% of our employees were aged 30 to 40 in April 2015, falling by 1.1% since 2013 and by 5.1% since 2009. The percentage of our staff aged 20 to under 30 years stands at 11.3% and staff under the age of 20 years stands at just 0.8%.

We continue to take steps towards understanding our workforce better across all the protected characteristic groups. As part of our recruitment processes, applicants are asked to confirm personal information, including age, gender, ethnicity, disability (and / or any caring responsibilities), sexual orientation, religion and belief, and transgender status.

All adult social care and substance misuse contracts include a standard equalities clause, with the right the request each provider organisation produce a report confirming compliance with equalities legislation if required.

All our current adult social care contracts require the provider to submit equalities reports annually in addition to work-force data being provided by all contractors at least every 12 months.



We always undertake to produce and publish Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) to support Key Decisions which are published online. Services are required to use the EIA process when engaging in redesigns that could potentially affect service delivery, as a means of ensuring that sufficient due regard is being paid to the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The form used for the EIA process has recently been revised to ensure the framework remains as clear and effective as possible.

Publication of our EIAs also helps satisfy the requirement to publish information regarding persons affected by our policies and practices, as laid out in the specific duties.

Tameside's Partnership Information Portal (PIP) is also a source of data which can help to inform the completion of EIAs. PIP provides access to statistics and indicators at differing geographical levels across the borough, and covers a number of themes including educational achievement, health, employment and public perceptions. Demographic information is also available, with certain data sets being broken down by equality group.

Open Data has increased transparency about the information we hold and allows the community to creatively use the data for the benefit of Tameside.

Open data is data that can be freely used, reused and redistributed by anyone - subject only, at most, to the requirement to attribute and share-alike.

Nationally the Transparency and Open Data agenda has been driven by national government. The Transparency Code, in particular designates a number of datasets which must be published in order to meet statutory requirements and the manner in which they must be published. Tameside Council recognised the need to not only meet these requirements but also to go further whenever possible to ensure that information about how we operate is published in an open and transparent fashion.

This information is available at [www.tameside.gov.uk/transparency](http://www.tameside.gov.uk/transparency) and [www.tameside.gov.uk/opendata](http://www.tameside.gov.uk/opendata).

Making sure any relevant data is open and transparent will help support us in ensuring we meet our obligations under the Equality Act.



## Equality Training, Development & Awareness

Following on from the Council's 'One Workforce: Tameside Workforce Development Plan 2013-16', the Council launched a full programme of activity to increase employee engagement and involvement as part of its 'Working Better Together Strategy'. The Chief Executive and the Senior Management Team decided they would hold a series of sessions with the entire workforce across different council venues to allow all employees to meet the Senior Management Team and experience first-hand hearing key messages around the Council's priorities and challenges. More importantly this also allows them the time and space to meet colleagues and discuss their ideas, suggestions and burning issues, therefore increasing their direct engagement and involvement.

A total of 25 sessions have been held so far, with 1398 employees from across all service areas of the Council having attended and participated. Further sessions are scheduled over the coming months. Improvements from the sessions have included an updated Annual Development Review scheme, refreshed values, new leadership behaviours and a development programme that keeps valuing diversity and equality at the top of the agenda.

Following the implementation and the roll out of the Virtual College e-learning system (which can be accessed through the 'GEARS Portal'), employees are now able to access the necessary training connected to their roles. The personal e-learning account stipulates certain mandatory courses depending on the job role and its requirements.

All staff are required to complete some form of equality training, and the Equality & Diversity in the Workplace module is one of four modules made available for all staff by default. Depending on job role, staff will undertake more detailed training and development courses, for example where there may be issues relating to child or adult safeguarding.

E-learning courses include Equality & Diversity in the Workplace; Equalities & Cohesion Duties for Managers; Hate crimes & Hate incidents; Equality

& Inclusion in Health, Social Care or Children & Young People's settings; Safeguarding issues; and Mental Health Awareness.

As of June 2015, there were 2317 learner records registered on the e-learning system. Of the four courses, 86.6% of learners had completed the Data Protection training, 63.0% the Equality & Diversity training; 59.4% the Fire Safety training and 55.1% the Health & Safety training.

The equality agenda is also embedded across many of the other e-learning modules including Safeguarding and Information Management.

Arrangements are in place through the AGMA Training Procurement Framework for Managers and Staff to access group courses, and the overall training provision offer has been assessed to ensure sufficient coverage across all equality groups. This remains under review to ensure continued and proportionate coverage.

Service specific Equality, Diversity & Identity, is delivered for the Looked After Children Service twice per year for Residential and Fostering Service. It was agreed by Residential Managers that they would continue to send new staff on this session despite still being required to complete the E Learning Equality and Diversity in the Workplace because of the specific links to Looked After Children and identity. The E Learning Equality and Diversity is also available to Foster Carers for those carers who are not always able to access classroom style courses

There are consistent messages related to Equality and Diversity in many other training courses too, examples including Voice of the Child and Safeguarding Children Awareness as it underpins all working practice.

Staff based at key access points, and in frontline services, such as Customer Services & Welfare Rights, undertake equalities training and equality training forms part of the induction for all new staff. All members of staff have regular team meetings which allow them to discuss any issues related to delivery as well as use them to organise additional training when required.



Equalities briefings are circulated via Senior Managers and the Equality Champions Group. The Equality Champions Group meets quarterly and is chaired by Cllr Margaret Sidebottom, with Cllr Brenda Warrington (portfolio lead for Equalities) in attendance. The Group continues to discuss and share information around developments in the equality agenda such as changes to legislation, council equality policies and procedures, and best practice.

We continue to work with schools to raise awareness of equality legislation, their responsibilities regarding publication of equality objectives and equality information, and how to tackle issues such as bullying and hate-crime reporting.

Tameside Libraries have collections of books, newspapers and magazines in a number of languages: Bangla, Urdu, Gujarati, Polish and Chinese. Dual language children's books are also available in English and the following languages: Albanian; Arabic; Farsi; French; Portuguese; and Russian. The Local Studies & Archives Centre holds a collection of tape recorded interviews with people who have come to Tameside from the Indian subcontinent.

The library service provides special library membership and packs for children from homeless families and Looked After Children, with 166 children (aged 0-17) and 27 adults caring for Looked After Children, benefiting from this special membership.

Libraries stock a range of books covering Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender (LGB&T) themes. The Local Studies and Archives Unit collect books and other material 18 which relate specifically to LGB&T history in the towns of Tameside or the Manchester area.

With over 160,000 visitors a year (of which 10% on average are from a BME background), and delivering educational sessions to approximately 4,000 school pupils a year, our Museums & Galleries Service is active in developing exhibitions, activities and resources to help communicate, educate and publicise the wide cultural heritage of the borough.

The borough's two museums and two art galleries host over 14 temporary exhibitions every year and organise a range of events and activities, providing access to topics of relevance to a number of equality groups.

Additionally, museums and galleries educational reach has been extended due to the funding and support we have received from Arts Council England and Curious Minds, the Arts Councils bridge organisation. The Cultural Services teams has worked hard in creating good working relationships with all Borough based schools and community organisations to support them in delivering 'Arts Award'.

Arts Award is a unique national qualification that helps young people to develop as artists and arts leaders. The programme develops their creativity, leadership and communication skills. It is open to anyone aged from 5 years to 25 years and embraces all interests and backgrounds. Through Arts Award young people learn to work independently, helping them to prepare for further education and employment. The award is managed by Trinity College London in association with Arts Council England working with 10 regional Bridge organisations.

Arts Award offers young people an inspiring arts journey. Each path can take a different direction; from fashion to film-making, dance to design and photography to poetry. Whichever route they choose to follow, young people are always in the driving seat.

Over the last two years we have worked with approximately 10,000 pupils and young people, supporting them on their Arts Award journey. Most participants have been entered at either 'Discover' or 'Explore' level, though we have successfully submitted 50 young people at Bronze level with each participant achieving a pass.

Arts Award has provided an opportunity to have additional educational reach across the Borough and enabled local school children and young people access to a fantastic creative and cultural experience.

We offer most, if not all of our theatre productions either free of charge or at a significant discount for any Looked After Children and their parents and carers. This aims to increase take up within this group and increase their proactive cultural engagement. We also seek to remove as many barriers and encourage as far as feasible this groups access to high quality cultural experiences.

## Tameside Diversity Festival

The first ever Tameside Diversity Festival took place in January 2015 as part of National Hate Crime Awareness Week. The aim of the Festival was to promote diversity and celebrate the different communities that make up Tameside.

Just a few examples of activities undertaken during the festival period include:

- Pupils from Denton Community College worked together with Adult Services to help a local disability group with swimming, cooking, sport and dance at Medlock Centre, Droylsden
- Both a Men's and Ladies Lunch Club at Hyde Bangladesh Welfare Association provided an opportunity for members of the community to come along and join in a celebration of Asian food
- Celebration of African Culture with snacks, games, music and dance organised by People First Tameside in Ashton
- Hate Crime Artwork comprising banners, badges and bags created by local people with learning difficulties to raise awareness of Hate Crime was on display for the whole week at Portland Basin Museum
- "Tales from Across the World" – cultural storytelling sessions with Simon the Storyteller at Portland Basin Museum on Saturday 24 January

- Diversity focused assemblies were delivered every day at Droylsden Academy and Denton Community College
- Silver Springs and Arlies Primary School, Stalybridge organised a week long programme of activities across the whole school to celebrate Diversity and challenge bullying and discrimination
- Tameside Youth Service provision throughout the week had a Diversity focus with young people exploring what Diversity meant to them and spent time thinking about what it would be like to walk in someone else's shoes – such as someone with a disability or who came from a marginalised community
- Diversity Event at Bennett Street Youth Centre in Hyde on Saturday 25 January which provided a mixture of performances and stalls which celebrated diversity and promoted strong messages about reporting hate crime.

Based on the success of the event it is proposed to hold a similar festival during National Hate Crime Awareness Week in January 2016.



Continuing to raise awareness of groups who may face increased levels of discrimination remains one of our priorities. The following are examples of initiatives undertaken to achieve this.

## Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender

We recognise that our LGBT population often face discrimination and additional barriers when needing support. In partnership with the other nine local authorities of Greater Manchester, specific funding has supported work to reach out to Tameside LGBT residents. The collaborative contract with the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Foundation supports the provision of one on one support, training for professionals, safer sex information packs and additional HIV testing opportunities.

In addition during 2014/15:

- The LGBT foundation surveyed 100 LGBT Tameside residents to seek their views about health and life in Tameside.
- More young LGBT and young people who are questioning their sexuality accessed support from OutLoud a fantastic support for young people who just want to meet other young people who are LGBT and get support. The group is run by the youth service in a safe positive environment.
- Gay and bisexual men have accessed different methods to test for HIV, as supported by national guidance, and safer sex packs in a range of venues recognising that the largest group affected by HIV in Tameside and Greater Manchester are gay and bisexual men.
- LGBT communities are detailed as a specific population group who need reaching by smoking cessation services.

## People living with HIV

People living with HIV are protected in law against discrimination. In partnership with other GM authorities Tameside work with George House Trust to support residents living with HIV. This support aims to provide direct emotional and practical support and recognises that the reality of being HIV positive means that many people living with HIV will still experience the negative experiences of living with a condition which are not physiological but societal. HIV remains a very misunderstood infection by many professionals and the wider community.

## Hate Awareness Week

As part of the national Hate Crime Awareness Week teams from Neighbourhood Services delivered a number of events across the borough.

The purpose of Hate Crime Awareness Week is to tackle Hate Crime issues by raising awareness of what Hate Crime is and how to respond to it and to encourage reporting of incidents. Staff worked with local groups and community organisations to deliver a series of events across Tameside, as well as working in partnership with the police, fire service and local schools.

## Hate Crime Action Plan

To tackle hate crime in Tameside and provide safe places for victims to report such incidents, specific engagement work is being undertaken with young disabled adults to help develop and shape the service around their needs.

The main objective is to redesign hate reporting centres as “Safe Spaces” where residents can get advice on a broader range of issues to keep them safe (such as crime prevention advice).

The Disability People First User Group has been engaged with a view to developing a consultation on Safe Spaces and to undertake wider consultation with people with a disability.

The young disabled adults were asked to tell the staff where they feel safe – which tended to be with friends, family, support staff and their own User Group. It was felt that this would be the ideal starting point for developing safe spaces rather than the existing corporate buildings which had been identified as Reporting Centres.

The Group were asked to share their experiences of the last week in terms of something good which had happened but also to speak up on any problems they had encountered. It was clear that whilst most of them had experienced some forms of unacceptable comments which could be classified as “hate crime” the vast majority of them did not recognise this as such – as they had grown up used to having others make unfavourable comments to them.

Following on from these sessions it was clear that the Council and Partner organisations needed to link in more with disabled people to help them shape the development of safer spaces and publicity materials to be produced to promote these venues.

A detailed action plan has now been developed for the Tameside Hate Incident Panel not just around the development of the “Safe Spaces” but others which link into this initiative. These include:

- Production of a short and authoritative myth busting document for use in the wider community aimed at ending mental health discrimination.
- The Young Disability Group and the People First User Group are working together to design a logo for the Safer Spaces – along with a suitable strap line to be used on literature and training material around hate crime and promotion of the Safer Spaces venues.
- To continue to strengthen links with the Shadow Learning Disability Board facilitated by People First and engage with disabled users on the Safe Spaces venues and wider community safety issues.

## Mental Health & Community Resilience

This pilot project is commissioned by Public Health and provided by Tameside, Oldham and Glossop Mind. It is a prevention and early intervention service that harnesses the opportunities that key local people e.g. hairdressers, pub landlords and community group leaders have to build community resilience. With support and training provided by Tameside, Oldham and Glossop Mind, these “Community Partners” offer advice and guidance to their staff and customers which will improve their wellbeing and reduce access to higher end services.

Individuals in key community roles across Tameside were recruited with the objective of forming a network of Community Partners. Roles include community group workers, sports coaches, teachers, pharmacists, library workers, hairdressers, beauty therapists and hospitality workers (pubs, cafés and restaurants). Training sessions will be held in each of the nine townships with a view to recruit a balanced representation of individuals across the borough.

A “Train the Trainer” model is used to equip local people to support their communities and build up knowledge and skills that could be sustained over the longer term. The content of the workshops is tailored to the needs of individual communities including:

- Support and listening skills
- Dealing with individuals in distress
- Making Every Contact Count resources
- 5 Ways to Wellbeing self-help guide
- Details of services and support available in Tameside and practical information about how to access them (e.g. public transport timetables, maps etc.).

At the end of the training, individuals are given a Certificate, a package of Support Resources and encouraged to join our network of Community Partners.

128 individuals have been trained to date, with one additional session planned for summer 2015. MIND have also created a network of community partners – 92 of the attendees have signed up to MIND’s e-distribution list and expressed an interest in participating further.





## Consultation & Engagement

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Tameside has a strong history of consultation and engagement. It allows us to use people's views and opinions to help shape services to meet the needs of service users and residents.

The recent Customer Service Excellence assessment has seen Tameside awarded eight areas of Compliance Plus, one of which in recognition of our ability to interact within wider communities and demonstrate the ways in which we support those communities. In addition, our particular efforts to identify hard to reach and disadvantaged groups / individuals and to develop our services in response to their specific needs has also been noted.

Ensuring robust consultation and engagement processes are in place is particularly important in the current economic climate. Since 2010 we have had to cut £104 million from our budget and by 2016/17 a further £38 million will be cut. Providing residents with the opportunity to have their say on how we can best make these cuts whilst delivering inclusive services is crucial.

The 'Big Conversation' is our primary tool for obtaining the views and opinions of local residents and service users on service delivery and redesign. Consultations undertaken via the Big Conversation can be supported by other consultation and engagement methods including focus groups and deliberative workshops. This can help to ensure that the views of groups who may be less likely to engage are collected and taken into consideration.

The following are examples of key consultations which have recently taken place via the Big Conversation:

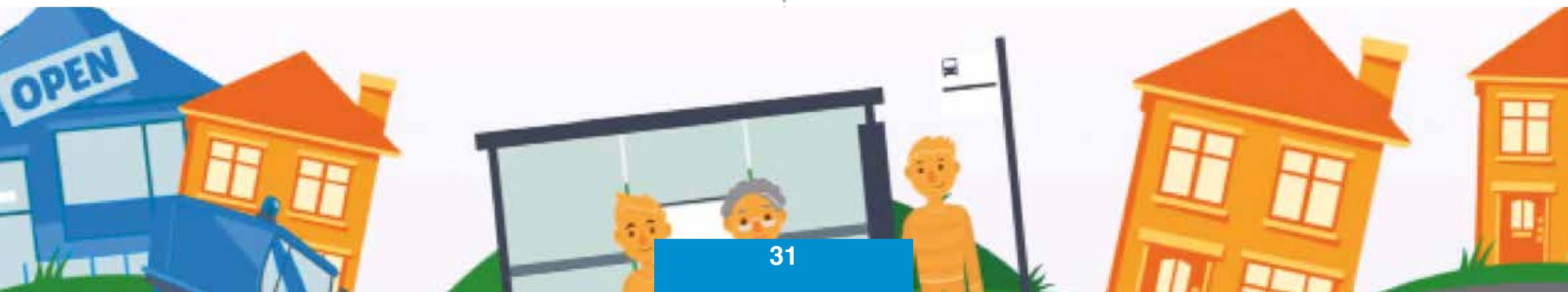
### Budget Consultation

In light of the scale of impending budget cuts, it was agreed to undertake an extensive budget consultation exercise. The approach included a video, which set out the financial challenges facing the council, and a budget simulator which asked residents to engage with a 2-year £38 million savings challenge. The budget simulator is a free tool hosted by the Local Government Association (LGA). It asks members of the public to consider where council cuts should fall, where efficiencies might be made, and where additional resources might be generated. Participants were also able to submit written suggestions.

The budget consultation was launched by the Executive Leader at Full Council on the 16 September 2014 and ran for 12 weeks until 9 December 2014.

In order to raise awareness of the budget consultation, and encourage participation, a set of flyers, posters and screensavers were designed to promote the consultation.

A number of channels were used to communicate the budget consultation to the public; this included both traditional methods such as press releases and articles in the local papers and the use of social media e.g. Facebook and Twitter.



In addition to promotion through written media, a full programme of engagement events took place across the borough. These included promotion at children's centres, libraries, sheltered accommodation sites as well as facilitated group sessions with young and older people.

Infographics were designed to help explain and distil the findings from the budget consultation in a clear and effective manner.

A total of 144 engagement events were held where members of the public had the opportunity to participate in the budget consultation. These took the form of both formal organised sessions with specific groups, for example engagement with older people through sessions run in sheltered housing or social groups, a hosted event with college students, sessions in supported housing and with carers.

A total of 2882 contacts have been received to the budget consultation across all channels including social media, emails, letters etc.

A total of 1,004 completed responses were received to the budget consultation via the simulator. In addition participants were able to provide comments and suggestions on how money could be saved from the Council's budget. All these responses were analysed and classified by theme, based on commonly mentioned issues and concerns. The comments submitted via Twitter, Facebook, dedicated email address and letter were also analysed and themed in the same way. A total of 608 comments and/or suggestions were received.

The findings from the budget consultation exercise were used, in conjunction with other considerations, to inform the Council's budget setting process. The council's budget was set at Full Council on the 24 February 2015 and took into account the findings from the consultation.

The full report on the budget consultation can be viewed at [www.tameside.gov.uk/executive/cabinet/04feb15/agenda](http://www.tameside.gov.uk/executive/cabinet/04feb15/agenda) under item 4.

## Care Act

The Care Act 2014 changed the rules governing how local authorities provide care services in the future, helping to improve people's independence and well-being. Local authorities must provide or arrange services that help prevent people developing needs for care and support or delay people deteriorating such that they would need ongoing care and support services.

Between 17 November 2014 and 9 January 2015 an extensive consultation exercise was undertaken with service users and residents on proposals for a new financial charging policy.

The consultation was challenging due to both the complexity of the Care Act implications and also the cohort of residents who would be affected by any proposals. It was important that any consultation undertaken was accessible to adult social care service users.

The primary consultation method was a questionnaire which could be accessed via the Big Conversation on the council's website. Hosting the consultation online provided increased reach and flexibility for respondents.



The consultation was publicised widely across different media outlets including Tameside Radio and local papers. In total 102 respondents completed the consultation, which is considered a good response rate given the nature of the subject.

In addition to the questionnaire, a series of deliberative workshops were undertaken. This targeted work helped to ensure a wide range of individuals from different backgrounds and protected groups could take part. Examples included the Multiple Sclerosis Society, Bangladeshi Welfare Association and Age UK.

The views and feedback from both the questionnaire and deliberative workshops were collated and translated into quantitative data to inform a report of the findings.

An Equality Impact Assessment was also undertaken to ensure the Care Act consultation did not discriminate against any particular group of residents. A copy of the full report presented to Executive Cabinet on 25 March 2015 can be found at [www.tameside.gov.uk/executive/cabinet/25mar15/agenda](http://www.tameside.gov.uk/executive/cabinet/25mar15/agenda) (Item 10).

We engage with community groups through our work with Community and Voluntary Action Tameside (CVAT). Examples of recent projects where CVAT have supported engagement with community groups include;

Care Together – CVAT facilitated three engagement events on behalf of Care Together with High Peak CVS and Volunteer Centre Glossop in October 2014 on the 9 Outline Business Cases (OBCs) for phase 1 of the Care Together programme. 130 people attended the events overall.

Asset Based Community Development – CVAT were commissioned by the Public Health team to lead a 'Valuing our communities' programme identifying how to enable asset based community development approaches to build stronger and more resilient communities in Tameside.

Supporting Public Sector Reform - CVAT have committed an officer funded by Tameside Council in order to create pathways in and from the Public Service HUB into VCFOs in order to appropriately direct demand. A grants scheme 'Step up, Step out' supports this work via our consortium Better Futures Tameside (BFT).

'Generation Noise' and 'Generation Air' at Central Art Gallery were two exhibitions funded by Arts Council England to engage families with contemporary art. Young children were under-represented at the gallery and so the exhibitions and marketing were specifically created to appeal to families with children. Feedback from visitors shows this approach has worked, with new families visiting the gallery and visitor numbers increasing. There are two more 'Generation' exhibitions planned for 2015-16.

Every year the Museum Service runs an Open Art exhibition, where anyone who lives in Tameside can see their artwork hanging on the walls of Central Art Gallery. There is also an annual schools exhibition, where all schools are invited to submit work. Both exhibitions are successful at fostering community engagement, local pride and a sense of ownership of the gallery.

In 2014, the Museum Service launched Little Hands, a free weekly group for under 5s at Portland Basin Museum. The sessions involve storytelling, dancing and craft activities and aim to support school-readiness and increase confidence among pre-schoolers. The sessions have proved very popular each week and attract dads as well as mums. The museum has also held two sleepovers for local Brownies.

During Black History Month 2014, the Museum Service worked with Tameside's African community to host 'Kumbu Kumbu'; a celebration of African culture and traditions. The museum exhibited African paintings from an internationally renowned African artist, and contemporary African fashions were displayed among the museum's industrial gallery. Two event days were also held, showcasing African drumming, dancing and singing. This was the first time the museum had participated in Black History Month and was successful in attracting new audiences.

During Spring 2015, Portland Basin Museum hosted a series of weekly 'Storybox' sessions for people with dementia and their families/carers. This is part of an ongoing Cultural Services project to support people with dementia.

In May 2015, Portland Basin held its first 'Evening at the Museum' event, aimed at adults. Abney Orchestra, who are a community orchestra based in Mossley, played in the museum and the event attracted almost 300 people. Entry to our venues is free, as are most of the events and activities that we run, making them accessible to as many people as possible.

The Museums and Galleries Services is part of the Viewpoint Survey which benchmarks visitor profiles, demographic information, experience and satisfaction across the Greater Manchester area within museum venues. This information is analysed and provides us with data to improve our customer service, make changes to our exhibitions and to develop new interactives within the museum sites. In addition, the Museum Service has recently signed up to a new visitor survey, along with other Greater Manchester museums, which will give us further information about our visitors.

Portland Basin Museum has been rated as 'Excellent' by visitors on Trip Advisor and has received a 'Certificate of Excellence' for four years in a row. We read every comment and use them to make improvements where necessary. We also have comments books at each venue. We evaluate every school workshop via feedback forms given to teachers.

Evaluation has been a key aspect of our Arts Council England funded 'Generation' exhibitions at Central Art Gallery. A full report will be compiled at the end of the project to fully assess the impact the exhibitions have had on attracting families with young children.

Museums and Galleries also have a number of forums who are consulted with including the Heritage Consultation Group and the Trustees of the Manchester Regiment. Tameside Cultural Services has over 2500 followers on Twitter and also posts on Facebook via Tameside Council.

The Health and Wellbeing Service has established the Information Ambassador Network (IAN), which has 232 members from community, voluntary and faith groups. The purpose of the IAN is to disseminate key information to members of groups, and receive feedback from the community via Information Ambassadors, and to consult with the community.

The Information Ambassadors, between them, represent 215 groups and over 13,600 people, from a range of backgrounds. Information gained from consultation is used to inform the development of sub-threshold services, and as a means of informing grant funding.





The Making Every Contact Count Programme (MECC) is now in its third year. MECC is a programme that makes best of every appropriate opportunity to raise the issue of healthy lifestyles. It is also:

- Systematically promoting the benefits of healthy living within an organisation and to local residents
- Raising the issue of lifestyle change with individuals and discussing changes they may wish to make
- Responding appropriately to the lifestyle issues that may be raised
- Taking appropriate action by either offering information or signposting to relevant services

Other health related consultation and engagement programmes include the Public Health Ageing Well programme which provides project-based activities on age-related agendas, including dementia; falls prevention; loneliness; and challenges to dominant dependency narratives of ageing. Much of this work also lent itself to engaging people with dementia in positive and therapeutic activity that focused on the process of participation to achieve changes in terms of improved quality of life and clinical outcomes.

One specific example used cultural arts interventions, as an alternative to using pharmacological interventions to manage behaviours. The use of music enabled older people with memory problems to make connections and build relationships.

The project began in September 2014 and is due to be completed by September 2015, followed by an in-depth evaluation. Recommendations to Tameside's Care Together integration programme will be made from the findings of the evaluation, for the purpose of informing dementia service redesign.

The project has already made an impact, with Tameside Hospital NHS Foundation Trust seeking to invest in a three-year Storybox residency that will see a performance artist working with dementia patients and staff. Participants who have taken part in this experience have been featured on BBC Radio Manchester.

The project was delivered by Manchester Camerata and Small Things arts companies, to provide 'Music in Mind' and 'Storybox' sessions respectively.

It is hoped that the pilot will be extended and scaled up across the borough, as part of the Care Together Programme.

The Health and Housing project is a community asset research project, delivered by the local community and taking place in Cavendish Mill and Dukinfield Central Estate. It is collaborative project involving: New Charter, Tameside Council, Manchester University, CVAT, GMP and NHS Health Improvement. Ten local people who are currently out of work have been recruited by CVAT to develop and complete research. In return they receive training from Manchester University and a certificate to add to their CV to further job opportunities.



Dukinfield Central and Cavendish Mill have often been target areas of improvement across many agencies due to poor health rates, high unemployment and high crime area. As a response, agencies have put in place services to improve the outcomes of the area. However, the areas also have many positive aspects and a high level of community spirit.

Health and Housing aims to build on the good, engaging with all the residents with regards to the positive experiences they have got from living on the estates. The expected outcomes are:

- The researchers' will gain new skills, work experience and a qualification which can then improve opportunities for future employment
- To build and enhance skills in the community to assess local health needs and give residents the skills and resources to be part of the solution
- Through evaluation of the research, we hope to achieve positive changes in local service delivery and local community activities that promote health
- To bridge the gap between decision makers and local residents
- Positive changes to the social and environmental factors affecting health and wellbeing
- Engages with all residents on the estates ensuring the community voice is heard.



Within the Library Service, the Local Groups and Organisation Database is the largest listing of local groups in Tameside, containing over 900 organisations covering a broad range of interests and protected characteristic groups.

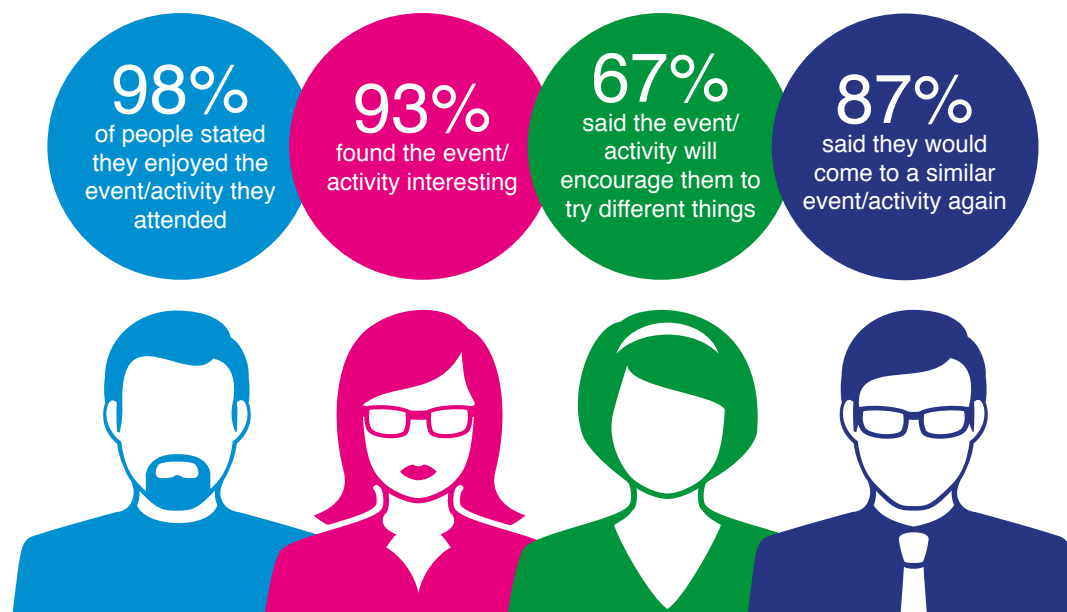
Young volunteers between the ages of 12-18 are regularly involved in helping to deliver activities and events in libraries throughout the year, in particular during the summer holidays.

Originally developed with Tameside Older People's Partnership, the 'Book Time for Yourself' group for over 50s has been established as a successful model which now runs in six libraries, offering talk therapy, befriending and social activities.

At the end of September 2014 Tameside Libraries hosted a series of Wellbeing Events for the elderly to coincide with International Day of Older Persons, taking place on 1 October every year. The libraries received funding from the Tameside Health and Wellbeing Service Fund to organise the programme as part of the Boroughs wider Older Peoples Day celebrations. The aim of the celebration events was to offer accessible and interesting sessions for older people to enjoy at each of the libraries in Tameside. Events included: author talk, writing workshop, e-books workshop, computer basics and various other talks. A total of 50 people attended the events. A high percentage were women, more than 50% were over 65, and 20% of those completing feedback forms stated they had a disability.

All the activities directly supported four of the 5 ways to wellbeing; connect, take notice, be active and keep learning.

On feedback:



We will always look to develop specifically tailored consultation and engagement activity for certain equality groups and disadvantaged or vulnerable people within the Borough as required.

Bangladeshi women in Tameside are identified as being more socially isolated than other groups of people. A partnership project between Hyde Community Action, Tameside Council, Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service and Greater Manchester Police aimed to address this isolation by engaging these women in their own communities to help them contribute to society and as a result increase aspirations.

Trained Bangladeshi women volunteers visit each household in the area and offer home security surveys, home fire risk assessments (GMFRS), help with recycling, information about schemes such as alley gating and any other issues they may need assistance with.

With this increased contact the volunteers hope to help residents to access any further advice they may need towards increasing social inclusion, and to help in areas such as entering further education, training and employment.

Active Tameside has a disability sport and physical activity objective in which they seek to increase participation within a high quality bespoke offer for people with disabilities or additional needs. The Trust will provide a new offer for the under 5's to support the development of physical literacy attracting over 12,750 visits a year, provide a multi-sport and physical offer for young people and adults with disabilities or additional needs increasing from 14,000 to over 30,000 visits a year. In addition, they aim to provide a bespoke training facility at Active Medlock attracting over 6,600 visits a year focusing on the development of life skills and achieving an active healthy lifestyle. The Trust also continues to support the boroughs disability sports club 'Tameside Titans'.



## Information, Intelligence & Need – Understanding Service Use & Access

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Understanding our customers and service users is vital in ensuring that we deliver effective and cost efficient services. The use of information and intelligence in order to better understanding our communities is crucial to this.

The Tameside Integrated Needs Assessment (TINA) is a suite of tools that have been designed to enable staff to better understand the differing needs of communities within the borough and provide services in a more targeted way. For example one particular area of the borough may need specific health interventions whilst another may require more help with tackling anti-social behaviour.

The borough is divided into four neighbourhood areas, each with its own neighbourhood team. In order to assist the team in setting its priorities a neighbourhood needs assessment has been produced for each of the four areas based on the information contained within TINA. TINA is updated on a quarterly basis to ensure that any emerging/changing issues can be identified quickly.

The suite of tools included within TINA are:

- Lower super output area descriptors
- 60 Socio Economic Indicators
- Tameside Insight
- Census Profiler
- Community Asset Mapping
- Partnership Information Portal (PIP)
- Cost benefit analysis (CBA) tool
- Unit cost database
- Monitoring and evaluation framework

A dedicated area on the Council's Intranet site provides all the resources and further guidance to aid practitioners in using the different tools.

We are also in the process of refreshing Tameside Insight, our bespoke customer segmentation tool, demonstrating our commitment to the continued use of customer monitoring, information and intelligence. Tameside Insight was first developed in 2009 to create a semi-bespoke customer segmentation tool for Tameside. The reason for creating our own segmentation tool was because 50% of the population fell into three categories of the national Mosaic segments and in order to better understand our residents we needed to differentiate them more effectively.

Tameside Insight apportions all households within the borough into one of twelve segments based on their needs and behaviours. This was built by combining Experian Mosaic data with an extensive range of Tameside Council's and the Fire Service's customer focused data.

Since the development of the original dataset, the latest Census has taken place and other data providers such as DWP, Public Health Observatory, HMRC, Home Office etc. have also released new and updated indicators. In light of the Open Data agenda organisations are also more willing to share data which will result in additional data sets being included this time around making it an ideal time to refresh the data. In order to ensure that we continue to understand our different customers, their characteristics and their differing needs and behaviours it is important to undertake a refresh of Tameside Insight.

Alongside the refresh, three bespoke models will also be developed to assist us in delivering the most efficient and effective services for local residents. The models are:

#### • High Dependency Model

A bespoke model to identify households that are in receipt of a high level of public sector services and the reasons why.

#### • Health Risk Stratification

A bespoke health risk stratification model – identifying those households with the highest risk of developing certain conditions, those with the lowest life expectancy and likely to access adult social care.

#### • High Net Worth Segment

A high net worth segment that represents individuals we would like to attract to the borough and the services applicable to them.

An example of where we have used a range of information and intelligence to inform service redesign in light of the financial challenges faced is Bin Swap.

In 2013/14 in order to help us reduce the costs of collecting and disposing of household waste and meet savings targets, we scoped a number of approaches aimed at reducing the amount of recyclable waste sent to landfill.

A scheme was drawn up that swaps what goes in the green and black bins – landfill waste goes in the green bin while glass, cans and plastic bottles go in the larger black bin, which has more capacity for recycling. This saves us money by reducing the amount of waste going to landfill.

Four pilot areas were selected based on recycling performance, population make-up, operational considerations and officer knowledge. Selecting a variety of pilot areas with different populations and characteristics was important to ensure the learning from the pilot is broad-based.

In total the four pilot areas make over 4,000 properties (4.3% of all properties in Tameside). The four areas selected included a mixture of protected characteristics such as BME, socio-economically deprived and the elderly.

In advance of the start of the pilot an extensive communications campaign was undertaken to notify residents in the pilot areas of the planned change to their waste collection arrangements. This included leaflet drops, articles in the local newspaper, updated collection schedules on the bin app and website, the recycling awareness trailer visiting the four pilot areas, new bins provided where needed, and liaison with community groups in each area.

The learning from the pilot, in particular the service user feedback, highlighted the need to consider the impact of the changes proposed on different groups of people within the community. An EIA was undertaken to ensure that the needs of the whole community were understood. As such an exceptional circumstances policy was developed to deal with those households where there is a genuine issue of capacity due to their specific circumstances e.g. a large number of children. In addition, the Bin Swap is not anticipated to have any impact on the Pull Out and Return Service which supports those residents unable to present their own waste bins for collection e.g. due to physical disability.

Due to the success of the pilot Bin Swap is being rolled out across the Borough in August 2015.

The redesign of our Greenspace & Operations Service also demonstrates how the use of intelligence resulted in a more flexible operating model with increased productivity. Active engagement was undertaken with staff, senior management, Elected Members, Trade Unions, and other partners, to create a service that was fit for purpose.



Switching to a unique zonal cleaning approach, and integrating two important Council agendas in crime and worklessness, and demand reduction, has allowed the service to broaden its remit whilst maintaining its core purpose. A prime example of this has been our partnership with the Probation Service Community Payback Team, and the Council's Youth Offending and Routes to Work (Learning Disability) teams. With reductions in our front line resource these partnerships have meant we can maintain environmental standards without seeing the drop off in service that usually accompanies large reductions. At the same time, we have been able to positively engage with a number of groups and individuals who often struggle to adjust to the demands of being in a work environment.

Over the past twelve months 20,000 unpaid hours have been committed to the service from Community Payback which has benefited all our communities.

Other outcomes include a reduction in operating costs by 42% over the last three years; the number of depots used reduced from 13 to three; a multi-functional service has been developed consolidating 26 job roles to six, and reducing the number of shift patterns from 16 to nine; still cleaning 715km but to a better quality standard, with estates swept every 28 days; continually improving resident satisfaction with the cleanliness of the borough - complaints dropped from 59 to 13 as the service was being transformed.

The work of the Greenspace & Operations Team was recognised at the recent Local Government Chronicle (LGC) Awards 2015 when they were awarded with the Efficiency Award. The judges commented, "The winner delivered an inspiring presentation and is a good example of moving forward despite tough economic conditions. It has not only made financial savings, but actually improves lives of residents".

With the recent national and local elections taking place on 7 May, it was important that as many residents as possible were registered to vote. Without registering people are unable to have their say on issues which affect them or decide who should represent them at all levels of government.

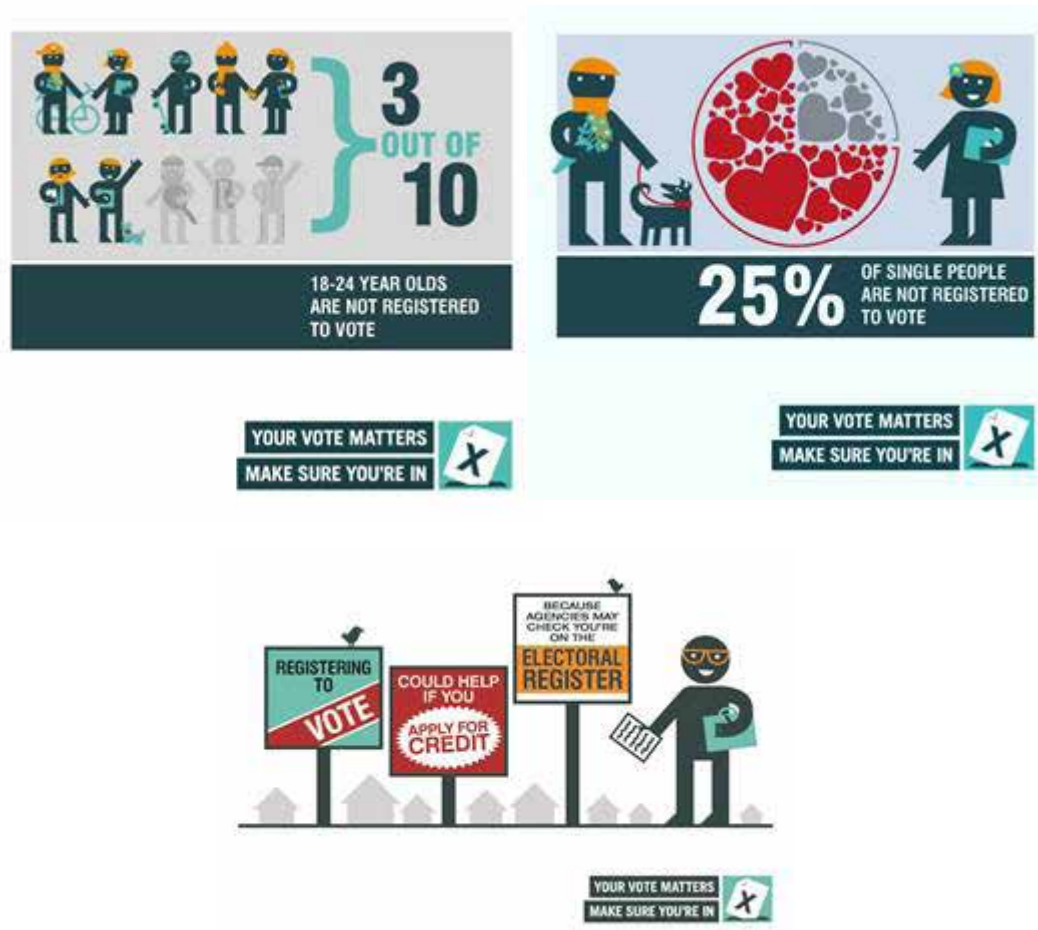
To support this, a localised Elections Engagement Strategy was developed to support both the national and Greater Manchester wide register to vote campaigns which were also running simultaneously. This required the tailoring of communication methods to ensure the message reached all residents.

Although the main focus of the strategy was to widely communicate the register to vote message amongst all residents, it also looked to target those less likely to vote, for example, young people, BME communities and private renters.

In addition to an extensive communications programme using social media and local press, partner organisations were engaged to help promote the register to vote message. These partner organisations included Registered Providers; Voluntary & Community Groups (CVAT, Hyde Community Action, Age Concern, MIND); Active Tameside; Citizens Advice Bureau; all schools and colleges with students aged 16-18. Partners were encouraged to promote the register to vote message in a variety of ways including through newsletters, websites, social media channels and community meetings.

Neighbourhood Teams were also engaged as another conduit to promote the message to local residents and community groups. The register to vote message was also promoted via our Call Centre so anyone contacting the Council was reminded about the importance of registration. Reorganisation of the Elections web pages was also undertaken to make them more accessible and user friendly. This included the introduction of polling station maps to help electors easily identify where their polling station is situated.

With national figures showing that three out of ten 18-24 year olds are not registered to vote, we were also particularly keen to engage with our younger residents and emphasise the importance of registering. Bite the Ballot, a party neutral not for profit community interest organisation, were invited to facilitate a 'Democracy Day' for local students aged 16 to 18. The Democracy Day, which was held on 25 March 2015 at Ashton Sixth Form College, was attended by over 50 students. A lunchtime 'Registration Rally' was also held in the canteen area of the college where all students were invited to come and find out more about registering to vote.



## Forward Look

Part 1 of the Scheme has given an overview of how we approach equality and diversity, together with some notable achievements and successes.

It has also shown that our approach to equality and diversity considers both the legal requirements of the nine protected characteristics and the broader aspects of inequality and disadvantage.

Part 2 of the Scheme explores in more detail the five key themes identified, setting out our objectives for taking forward the equality and diversity agenda in Tameside.

## Part 2: Objectives

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Information on the overarching themes of the Corporate Equality Scheme 2015-19, and the objectives which underpin our approach as outlined in 'Part 1: Our Approach & Achievements'



## Introduction

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In Part 1 of our Corporate Equality Scheme 2015 -19 we outlined our approach to managing equality and diversity in Tameside. We also highlighted some areas of achievement in line with the overarching themes that this section expands upon.

The aim was to demonstrate how we are doing a lot of work with regards to ensuring compliance with the relevant legislation; promoting awareness of equality and diversity through appropriate training and community events; and making positive strides to reducing inequalities in Tameside. This part of the scheme provides further information on the five key overarching themes, and the objectives which underpin them.

## Our CES 2015 -19 themes

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We have identified five key themes for taking forward the equality and diversity agenda in Tameside. These were first outlined in the CES 2011-15 and were developed following analysis of key issues arising from consultation and engagement, information taken from our other key strategic documents and plans, together with considering our legal requirements and resource considerations. As these remain the key issues for the Borough, we have decided to retain the same key themes for our second CES.

The five key themes are:

- Reducing Inequalities & Improve Outcomes
- Meeting our obligations under the Equality Act 2010
- Equality Training, Development and Awareness
- Consultation & Engagement
- Information, Intelligence and Need - Understanding Service Use and Access

Each is explained in more detail below.

### Reducing Inequalities & Improving Outcomes

This theme lies at the heart of not just the CES 2015-19, but at the heart of all our strategies and initiatives.

Reducing inequalities is the reason for the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. It is also the reason for much of the work we do as a Council, and it is this theme to which all the previous themes work towards achieving.

The objectives under this theme are high level and focus on key areas of inequality in Tameside. They are by no means exhaustive. Rather, they are the key areas that our work in developing this scheme highlighted as being in need of increased attention and focus. Other schemes and strategies are working to achieve these aims too.

In particular, our work towards achieving the aims outlined in the Corporate Plan, and the measures against which we will be assessing our progress, are particularly linked to this theme.

We know that in certain areas such as people's health, employment status and educational level, there are gaps that we need to address and attempt to narrow.

In developing the key priorities for the Corporate Plan we have considered wherever possible variation in outcomes as a result of geography, socio-economic status, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, and the circumstances of people which make them vulnerable.

For example, residents aged 50 and over are more likely to be long term unemployed. Of those residents in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance, 3 in 10 aged 25 to 49 are unemployed<sup>1</sup> for over 12 months. This rises to 4 in 10 residents for those aged 50 to 64.

<sup>1</sup> In receipt of JSA for 12 months or more (June 2015, Nomis)

Women in Tameside have a lower healthy life expectancy than men, and this is significantly lower than the national average<sup>2</sup>. Mortality from causes considered to be preventable is significantly higher in males than females; with premature mortality from preventable liver disease twice as high in males than females in Tameside.

As is the case nationally, educational attainment at Key Stage 2 and at GCSE level in the Borough remains higher for girls than boys.

Residents from a BME background are more likely than those from a White background to have a level 4 qualification or above<sup>3</sup>.

A far higher proportion of residents who state that their day-to-day activities are limited a lot do not have access to a car or van than those who state their day-to-day activities are not limited (42.4% compared to 18.0%).

The Corporate Plan provides a framework for how we measure our progress towards narrowing the gaps and improving peoples lives.

Where possible and practical, we will look to disaggregate results by equality group.

## Meeting our obligations under the Equality Act 2010

These steps are the minimum we must take in order to achieve legal compliance but we aim to go beyond this. They are a combination of what the law specifically requires us to do, coupled with things that we have decided need to be done in order to help us meet the general duty, or Public Sector Equality Duty as it is also known.

The Equality Act 2010 is both very broad in its expectations of what public bodies must strive to achieve, and also very specific in certain areas regarding the information it expects us to publish on equalities.

You can read more about the Public Sector Equality Duty in Part 3 of the Scheme, but in short, it requires us to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, victimisation and harassment in the services we deliver, as well as advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The objectives contained under this heading will help us do this. However, given how broad the requirements of the general duty are, the actions contained across all themes will be in some way connected to us meeting our duties.

## Equality Training, Development and Awareness

If we are to ensure that we meet our legal obligations, and deliver services that are fair and equitable, we need ensure that our staff are aware of their responsibilities. We also need to ensure that they are fully equipped to deal with the often complex needs of our service users.

Similarly, our customers and service users need to be aware of their rights too, and the ways in which we can support and assist them.

Equality training, development, and awareness is about both internal measures such as staff training, and external ones, such as raising awareness of the support available for different groups and individuals to access services.

It is also about the way in which we communicate with the Borough as a whole, the work we are doing and the varied range of services we offer to a range of people.

<sup>2</sup> This inequality is due to high levels of cancer, cardiovascular disease and respiratory disease. (Healthy life expectancy for women in Tameside is 56.6 yrs.)

<sup>3</sup> Census 2011 - Level 4 and above: Degree (for example BA, BSc), Higher Degree (for example MA, PhD, PGCE), NVQ Level 4-5, HNC, HND, RSA Higher Diploma, BTEC Higher level, Foundation degree (NI), Professional qualifications (for example teaching, nursing, accountancy)



## Consultation & Engagement

This theme runs heavily throughout the CES 2015-19. Without effective and meaningful consultation and engagement, we are unable to shape our services to meet customer need in the most efficient and service user friendly way.

The objectives contained in this section relate to how we maintain effective dialogue with our residents, communities and businesses to make best use of our resources, with a particular focus on ensuring that the needs of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged are heard.

## Information, Intelligence & Need – Understanding Service Use & Access

Once we know what our customers and service users need, and we are aware of any inequalities that exist, we need to make sure that those most in need and at a disadvantage can access services to improve their situations. This links to the awareness aspect of the earlier theme, but also to an understanding of how services are accessed.

Access to services is about, amongst other things, service availability, service location (both physical and virtual), and potential barriers. With increasing budgetary pressures and constraints, we need to consider how best to utilise our resources and those of partners to ensure the maximum benefit for those most in need.

## Monitoring Progress

We intend to carry out a full review of the above themes and objectives every four years, in line with current legislative requirements.

An annual review of progress will be undertaken in order to inform our understanding of how we are performing, and assist us in developing ways in which to better evidence the objectives.



# Corporate Equality Scheme 2015-19: Themes & Objectives

## Reduce Inequalities & Improve Outcomes

1	Address key priority quality of life issues such as health inequalities, educational attainment, access to skills, training and employment opportunities, and health and wellbeing, across equality groups and the vulnerable and disadvantaged, with a view to narrowing the gap
2	Help people to continue to live independent lives, and support the most vulnerable in our communities to access services that exist to support this aim, through targeted interventions and tailored service provision
3	Aim to increase the level to which people believe that Tameside is a place where people get on well together, amongst the population as a whole and by protected characteristic group

## Meeting our obligations under the Equality Act 2010

4	Publish our equality objectives and ensure that they are published in a manner that is accessible
5	Publish our workforce monitoring information by equality group (where known)
6	Undertake to produce and publish Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) to support key decisions and to be published with papers. These will help us to understand the impact of our policies and practices on persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic





### Equality Training, Development and Awareness

7	Ensure that staff are appropriately trained on equality legislation and their responsibilities under it, and are offered support and guidance through a range of methods and approaches such as briefing notes, training sessions and workshops
8	Raise awareness and understanding of equality and diversity by working with partners (such as CVAT, voluntary organisations, community groups and service providers) to ensure that those from protected characteristic groups are represented and supported
9	Develop and support, in conjunction with partners, community cohesion and cultural awareness events across a range of themes and activities to raise the profile of our varied communities and shared cultural heritage
10	To continue to work alongside partners and communities to raise awareness of Hate Crime and the impact on people's lives, with a focus on providing an environment where people feel able to report incidents e.g. Safe Spaces

### Consultation and Engagement

11	Consult and engage with our communities through a broad a range of methods and forums, such as surveys, consultation events and customer feedback to ensure comprehensive and meaningful coverage
12	Disaggregate the results of monitoring, surveys, feedback and consultation exercises by equality group (where appropriate and practical) to inform our understanding of the needs of different groups and individuals
13	Develop specifically tailored consultation and engagement activity where appropriate and when required for certain equality groups and disadvantaged / vulnerable people within the Borough

### Information, Intelligence & Need - Understanding Service Use & Access

14	Use a range of intelligence gathering, customer monitoring and insight tools, together with specific pieces of analysis, to inform both our understanding of residents, service users, service delivery and design, and to develop services that provide a varied, flexible and accessible offer
15	To encourage and promote the use of customer monitoring and disaggregation of data by equality group (where practical)
16	Use a variety of tailored communication methods to increase the accessibility and understanding of council services, that allows our different customers, residents and service users to make informed choices

## Part 3: Legislation

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Details of the legislative requirements underpinning the Corporate Equality Scheme 2015-19 and information on the Equality Act 2010



Building on the achievements and developments made since the introduction of the first Corporate Equality Scheme (2011-15), Tameside's Corporate Equality Scheme (CES) 2015-19 is our second since the introduction of the Equality Act 2010 which details how we fulfil our legal obligations under the public sector equality duty.

This part of the scheme provides details of how the CES 2015-19 fulfils our legal obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty of the Equality Act 2010. It also explains in more detail the meaning of the 'protected characteristics' that fall under the remit of the Act, and the Act's coverage.

At the end of the document, there are details on where further information can be accessed.





## The Public Sector Equality Duty and our responsibilities

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The Public Sector Equality Duty is laid out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It came into force on 5th April 2011, and it states that a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:-

- a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act;
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it;
- c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

These are often referred to as the three 'arms' of the duty.

In short, this means that we must consider the impact our actions have on equality, and whether when delivering a particular service or function, or in our role as an employer, we are furthering the aims set out in law. The specific duties, detailed below, show the minimum amount of information we must publish in order to show that we are complying with the general duty.

This new duty replaced the previous public sector equality duties that were in force covering race, gender and disability. It expands the scope of the previous duties to cover all 'protected characteristics' (although only the first 'arm' of the duty applies to marriage or civil partnership).

The duty also applies to bodies that deliver services on our behalf, as in doing so they are exercising a public function. So for example, a private sector provider that is contracted to deliver a service in relation to adult social care would be required to consider the general duty and would be subject to its provisions.

However, only the part of the organisation that is delivering the public service is subject to the duty; the organisation as a whole is not.

Having 'due regard' for advancing equality involves:

- a) Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- b) Taking steps to meet the needs of people who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encouraging people who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

This means that when we are considering how our practices, policies and procedures impact upon equality we need also be considering the ways in which we can mitigate any potentially negative impacts, and ensure that access to our services remains fair and equitable.

For example, the law requires us to make reasonable adjustments to the way in which services and public functions are delivered where a disabled service user may be placed at a substantial disadvantage. In considering how a service is delivered or offered, we need to consider the potential barriers that a disabled person may have to overcome in order to access it, and put in place reasonable adjustments to lessen these. Such adjustments may be physical, or they may involve providing an auxiliary aid, or altering the way in which the service is delivered.

## The specific duties

The specific duties are contained within the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011. They came into force from July 2011, and confirm the minimum steps that public bodies must take in relation to publishing information on equalities, such as workforce monitoring data and equality objectives.

The regulations state that by January 2012, and annually thereafter, we must publish information to demonstrate compliance with the general duty, including information about the protected characteristic status of employees, and other persons affected by our policies and practices.

By 6 April 2012, we must publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives, and subsequently at intervals of no more than four years from the date of first publication.

The information we publish must be in a manner that is accessible to the public, and may be contained within another published document. This in effect removes the requirement on public bodies to publish separate and specific equality schemes, as noted earlier.

However, in order to build on existing good practice and for ease of reference, we have decided to continue with the publication of a Corporate Equality Scheme.

## Compliance with the duty

Publication of the CES 2015-19 ensures that we are adhering to the regulation stating that we must publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives, and subsequently at intervals of no more than four years from the date of first publication. In addition to the annual progress reports which have taken place since the publication of our first CES in 2011, this is a refresh of the full scheme.

As with our previous scheme, parts 1 & 2 of the CES 2015-19 contain our equality objectives. We have ensured that these are outcome focussed and are in alignment with other key strategic documents, most notably the Corporate Plan.

These sections also detail the processes and structures we have in place to ensure that appropriate consideration of equality issues is embedded in our decision making and day to day work.

The scheme is published online. If required, a hard copy is also available with an easy read version on request. Similarly, it can also be translated on request. Furthermore, it builds upon the work done as part of our previous scheme by including details of how we have engaged with our communities and ensured that those protected under legislation have been involved as part of influencing, developing and shaping service delivery.

In providing the framework of how we approach equality in the Borough, it confirms a number of actions and processes that our services undertake in order to meet the general and specific duties. For example, the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process helps us ensure that the decisions we take have been properly considered for their impact on relevant protected characteristic groups, and are based on solid evidence, including feedback from consultation and engagement. We use the EIA process, and the principles embedded within it, to ensure that we are complying with the general Public Sector Equality Duty.

Similarly, the EIA process is just one of the ways in which we satisfy the requirement of the specific duties by publishing information relating to individuals sharing a relevant protected characteristic who are affected by our policies and practices.

Our EIAs support key decisions which are available on the council's website at <http://public.tameside.gov.uk/forms/CommitteeDocs.asp>

Information on the equalities information of our workforce is published online too, at [www.tameside.gov.uk/workforceequalitydata](http://www.tameside.gov.uk/workforceequalitydata)

## Protected characteristics

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The main provisions of the Equality Act 2010 came into force on 1st October 2010.

These provide the basic framework of protection against discrimination, harassment and victimisation, for the nine recognised 'protected characteristics' in employment, public functions and services, transport, premises, education, and associations.

The Act replaces all existing anti-discrimination laws<sup>1</sup> with a single piece of legislation. The aim is to streamline previous laws and 'level up' protection across the protected characteristic groups.

The nine protected characteristics, and what is meant by them, are detailed below, as are details of the protection given by the Act.

The nine protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Sex / Gender
- Religion or Belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy & Maternity
- Marriage & Civil Partnership

<sup>1</sup> Equal Pay Act 1970; Sex Discrimination Act 1975; Race Relations Act 1976; Disability Discrimination Act 1995; Equality Act 2006; Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003; Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006; Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

Please note that this is intended as a general overview and introduction only, and does not constitute legal advice.

The Equality Act 2010 is a wide-ranging piece of legislation and will apply differently in certain situations and circumstances. There are, for example, areas where discrimination is lawful, such as where the provisions of another law demand it, or where an action can be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. The level of protection afforded by the Act will depend on individual circumstances.

Details of where you can obtain further more detailed advice is at the end of this section.

### Age

This is defined as a reference to a person's age group. This can mean people of the same age, or a range of ages, for example 'under 18s' or 'over 50s', or a specific age group e.g. '25-34 year olds'. People who share the protected characteristic of age are therefore in the same age group, although this can be broad as well as very specific. Age groups do not have to be defined numerically, they can be relative e.g. 'older than you/me'.

### Disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disability as a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities. This includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and also any impairment which consists of a severe disfigurement. Long term means that the impairment has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least 12 months or the rest of the affected person's life.

The Act has changed previous disability law, in that a person now no longer has to demonstrate that their disability affects a particular function such as mobility or speech. This used to be known as the 'list of capacities'.

Some illnesses, such as cancer, multiple sclerosis and HIV infection, are covered by the Act, from the point of diagnosis, under the protected characteristic of disability. Progressive conditions, and those with fluctuating or recurring conditions, will also be considered as disabilities in certain circumstances.

The Act strengthens the support given to people associated with someone with a disability, such as carers, by expanding the coverage of discrimination by association to cover disability.

It also introduces the concept of discrimination arising from a disability, where someone suffers unfavourable treatment as a consequence of something arising from their disability.

The Act also seeks to ensure that disabled people are given fair treatment when applying for positions of employment, in that it now bans the asking of pre-employment health questions, including sickness absence (other than in certain, specific circumstances).

For information as to what constitutes a disability under the Act, and where the Act applies, please consult the Statutory Codes of Practice or the information held on the Office for Disability Issues website.

## Race

A person who is from a particular racial group will have the protected characteristic of race. A racial group is defined as a group of people who have, or share, a colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins. All racial groups are protected from unlawful discrimination under the Act, and an individual may fall into more than one racial group.

## Sex / Gender

Sex or gender refers to a man or woman of any age, or groups of men and/or boys, and women and/or girls. The protected characteristic of sex / gender does not include gender reassignment or sexual orientation. These are covered separately.

## Religion or Belief

Religion or belief includes any religion and any religious or philosophical belief. This protected characteristic therefore includes the commonly recognised religions such as Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism and Buddhism for example. However, in order to be protected, a religion does not necessarily need to be mainstream or particularly well known, but it must have a clear structure and belief system. It also includes a lack of any religion or belief, for example philosophical beliefs such as Humanism and Atheism.

## Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation refers to a person's sexual orientation towards persons of the same sex (i.e. a gay man or a lesbian), persons of the opposite sex (i.e. heterosexual), and persons of either sex (i.e. bisexual). It also relates to how people feel, as well as their actions. Discrimination under this protected characteristic covers discrimination as a result of how someone's sexual orientation manifests itself i.e. in how that person presents themselves, or the places they choose to visit.

## Gender Reassignment

Gender reassignment is the act of moving away from one's birth sex to the preferred gender i.e. from male to female, or vice-versa. It covers anyone who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing, or has undergone the process (or part of the process) to reassign their sex.

The Act removes the requirement for the person proposing to undergo this change to be under medical supervision in order to be protected, recognising that it is a personal process and not necessarily a medical one.

## Pregnancy and Maternity

Where a woman is pregnant or on maternity leave she is covered by this protected characteristic, as well as being covered by protection and rights afforded to her by other statutory rights such as time off for antenatal care and health and safety protection. In cases where an employer has to treat a pregnant employee more favourably than other workers, men cannot make a claim for sex discrimination based on this more favourable treatment.

## Marriage and Civil Partnership

When the Equality Act 2010 was first introduced marriage referred to any formal union of a man and a woman which is legally recognised in the UK as a marriage.

Civil Partnership refers to a registered civil partnership under the Civil Partnership Act 2004, including those registered outside of the UK. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except where permitted by the Equality Act).

However following legal changes in 2014, same sex couples can now marry in civil ceremonies or religious ones where the religious organisation allows it throughout England, Scotland and Wales. Civil partners who wish to convert their civil partnership into marriage are also able to do so. Additionally, married transgender men and women are now able to change their legal gender without having to end their marriage.

The status of being unmarried or single is not protected. Similarly, people who intend to marry or form a civil partnership but have not yet done so, or who are divorced or have had their civil partnership dissolved, are not protected by this characteristic.





## Discrimination, victimisation and harassment

The Equality Act provides the basic framework of protection for people in relation to employment, public functions and services, transport, premises, education, and associations. Most protected characteristic groups are covered by the Act in relation to the areas below, although there are some differences as to when and where this protection applies.

The information given below is intended as a brief overview of the main principles and coverage of the Act. It is not definitive and it does not constitute legal advice.

### Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than someone else because of a protected characteristic. This definition is broad enough to cover cases where the less favourable treatment is because of the victim's association with someone else who has that characteristic (discrimination by association), or because the victim is wrongly thought to have that characteristic (discrimination by perception).

The Equality Act extends the coverage of discrimination by association and discrimination by perception to disability, sex, and gender reassignment.

Previously, discrimination by association and discrimination by perception only applied to race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation.

### Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs when a rule or policy which applies in the same way for everybody has an effect which particularly disadvantages people with a protected characteristic. Where a group of people are disadvantaged in this way, a person in that group is indirectly discriminated against if he or she is put at that disadvantage, unless the person applying the rule or policy can justify it. Where this rule or policy can be justified it is said to be a

proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. Indirect discrimination is therefore not always unlawful.

The Equality Act extends the coverage of indirect discrimination to disability and gender reassignment.

### Harassment

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a particular protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person. When considering whether conduct has that purpose or effect, the victim's perception is taken into account, as well as all the circumstances of the case and whether it is reasonable for the conduct to have that effect.

Whilst there is no specific prohibition on harassment related to religion or belief, sexual orientation or pregnancy and maternity, direct discrimination provisions prohibits treatment such as bullying and harassment which results in a person being treated less favourably.

### Victimisation

Victimisation occurs when someone is treated badly because they have done something in relation to the Equality Act, such as making or supporting a complaint or raising a grievance about discrimination, or because it is suspected that they have done or may do these things.

Similarly, a victim of harassment need only demonstrate that they have been treated badly; they do not have to show that they have been treated less favourably than someone who has not made or supported a claim under the Act by way of comparison.

A person is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint.

## Further information

The Equality Act 2010 is wide ranging and broad in scope, drawing together numerous pieces of legislation and covering a multitude of situations, as it seeks to ensure that people are treated fairly and equally.

This part of our CES 2015-19 provides an introduction to some of the main concepts embedded in the Act, the principles which underpin it, and our responsibilities under it. Parts 1 and 2 of the CES 2015-19 show how we are putting this into practice.

If you wish to access further, more detailed information, about the Equality Act or equalities in general, a number of sources are listed below.

Tameside's Corporate Equality Scheme 2015-19 is available online on the Council's website:

[www.tameside.gov.uk/equalitydiversity](http://www.tameside.gov.uk/equalitydiversity)

The Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC), which was established under the Equality Act 2006 and brought together the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC), the Commission for Race Equality (CRE) and the Disability Rights Commission (DRC), has a statutory remit to promote and monitor human rights, and to protect, enforce and promote equality across the nine 'protected characteristics'.

They have published a number of guidance notes on the public sector equality duty, which are available on their website here:

[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

In addition they have published guidance notes on the protection afforded by the Equality Act 2010, which are also available online:

[www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/new-equality-act-guidance/equality-act-guidance-downloads/](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/new-equality-act-guidance/equality-act-guidance-downloads/)

For those wanting more detail, the Statutory Codes of Practice are also available. These are intended as the authoritative, comprehensive and technical guide to the detail of law. There are three Codes of Practice – 'Services, public functions, and associations'; 'Employment'; and, 'Equal pay' – with each providing specific details of the circumstances in which the Act is applicable. These can be accessed on the EHRC website here:

[www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/equality-act/equality-act-codes-of-practice/](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/equality-act/equality-act-codes-of-practice/)

The Equality Advisory Support Service (EASS) is an advice service aimed at individuals who need expert information, advice and support on discrimination and human rights issues and the applicable law, particularly when this is more than advice agencies and other local organisations can provide.

The EASS was commissioned by Government in 2012 to replace the EHRC Helpline, which is now closed. The EHRC is no longer able to respond to individual enquiries as the EASS has taken over this role. Information about the decision to close the Helpline is available on the Government Equalities Office website.

The EASS can:

- Give bespoke advice to individuals across the whole of Great Britain on discrimination issues
- Explain legal rights and remedies within discrimination legislation, across the three nations
- Explain options for informal resolution and help people to pursue them
- Refer people who cannot or do not wish to go down this road to conciliation or mediation services

- Help people who need or want to seek a legal solution by helping to establish eligibility for legal aid and, if they are not eligible, to find an accessible legal service or to prepare and lodge a claim themselves

But it cannot:

- Provide legal advice
- Provide representation in any legal proceedings
- Provide advice on court or tribunal procedures once a claim has been issued
- Advise on the strength of a case or the evidence needed to prove a case
- Provide advice to employers
- Provide advice to solicitors and other professional advisors

EASS can be contacted on 0808 800 0082 or by text phone on 0808 800 0084.

[www.equalityhumanrights.com/about-us/about-commission/equality-advisory-support-service](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/about-us/about-commission/equality-advisory-support-service)

The Government Equalities Office (GEO) is the department responsible for the Government's overall strategy and priorities on equality issues. It aims to improve equality and reduce discrimination and disadvantage for all, at work, in public and political life, and in people's life chances.

The GEO has also produced guidance material on the Equality Act, which is available online here:

[www.equalities.gov.uk/equality\\_bill.aspx](http://www.equalities.gov.uk/equality_bill.aspx)

The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) is part of the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP). It leads on the government's vision of achieving equality for disabled people, and through its work aims to ensure that disabled people have the same choices and opportunities as non disabled people. Information on their work, together with further guidance on how the Equality Act 2010 affects the laws protecting disabled people can be found online at:

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-for-disability-issues](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-for-disability-issues)

