

Brighton & Hove City Council

Policy & Resource Committee

Agenda Item 121

Subject: Fair & Inclusive update including Workforce Equalities Report 2020-21

Date of meeting: 24 March 2022

Report of: Abraham Ghebre-Ghiorghis, Executive Director, Governance, People and Resources

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Ward(s) affected: All

For general release

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

1.1 At 1 July 2021 meeting, P&R committee received a progress report on the council's Fair & Inclusive Action Plan, as well as the council's first voluntary ethnicity pay gap report. At this same meeting officers were instructed to produce annual ethnicity pay gap reporting in line with the gender pay gap reporting schedule and also requested to produce disability pay gap reporting annually going forward.

1.2 The co-created Fair & Inclusive Action Plan (FIAP) is in place to address disproportionate outcomes for diverse staff groups and communities across the council and city. This includes workforce actions to achieve proportionate representation across all levels, which should mitigate any reported positive pay gaps.

1.3 All the fair and inclusive work has been done in collaboration with our key stakeholders. Progress towards improved outcomes is monitored through a range of measures that includes both quantitative and qualitative data.

1.4 This report provides an update on fair and inclusive progress. It includes the annual Workforce Equalities Report 2020-21 (Appendix I) and outlines our priorities and future actions.

2. Recommendations

That the Policy & Resources Committee (P&R):

2.1 Notes the report and recommendations.

2.2 Continues to support and champion the actions within the Fair & Inclusive Action Plan.

- 2.3 Instructs officers to publish voluntary 2021 ethnicity and disability pay gap reporting in Autumn 2022 to allow meaningful engagement with stakeholders.

3. Context and background information

The council's workforce profile as at 31 December 2021

- 3.1 The percentage of BME and White Other staff within the workforce continues to increase. Compared with 31 December 2020, we have seen 1.0% and 0.7% increases in their workforce profiles respectively. This means 8.6% of the workforce now are from BME backgrounds, compared with a target of 9.1%. For White Other staff the current figure is 8.0%, compared with a target of 8.8%. It is important to note that whilst this is encouraging, both groups remain under-represented in the middle and upper pay bands (grades SO1/2 and above) and, are more likely to be employed in the lower pay band (grades 1-6).
- 3.2 Although disabled staff are proportionately represented in the workforce (7.9% compared with a target of 7.5%), our data shows they are not proportionately represented in the upper pay band (grades M8 and above).
- 3.3 Men remain under-represented within the council's workforce. Female staff and LGBTQ+ staff are proportionately represented at all levels.

Fair & Inclusive actions and progress

- 3.4 The annual Workforce Equalities Report 2020-21 (Appendix I) provides data on fair and inclusive progress and work carried out within that period.
- 3.5 Actions and progress from April 2021 to present include:
- HR Diversity Recruitment Consultant in post to carry out a range of targeted interventions; work has included:
 - Supporting more than 60 recruitment exercises across all directorates
 - Delivering fortnightly inclusive recruitment surgeries to offer timely advice to recruiting managers, such as inclusive advert writing, promotion of roles on social media and developing inclusive shortlisting questions
 - Establishing ethnically diverse panels and guidance for senior recruitment
 - Refreshing the council's jobs pages (ongoing) and improving guidance for applicants
 - Producing guidance for managers on how to give useful and constructive feedback to unsuccessful candidates
 - Piloting an 'Applying to Work at BHCC' insight programme with Voices in Exile to support refugees and migrants into employment

- Collaborating with the council's Adult Education Hub and other community partners to support employability skills training, for example, Next Steps for ESOL learners
- Attendance at virtual Universities careers fairs
- HR Business Partners providing support to six directorates in using data to identify positive actions to address under-representation
- Launching a Diverse Talent Programme (Jan 2022) for BME staff, including dedicated sponsors from the council's Leadership Network for each of the 16 delegates
- Providing development opportunities to our Leadership and Managers Networks to support the fair and inclusive agenda
- Continued delivery of Fair & Inclusive mandatory briefings, now reaching over 4000 staff
- Implementing a restorative approach to reports of racist behaviour, developed with our BME Workers Forum
- Offering (online) mediation
- Collating a range of Fair and Inclusive and Anti-racism resources on the Learning Gateway
- Progressing the IT&D accessibility workstream focussing on digital inclusion and accessibility
- Reviewing the reasonable adjustments process and increasing the range of disability-related training
- Becoming members of the Business Disability Forum to access a range of benefits to support management of disabled staff

Future actions

- 3.6 Managing workloads was highlighted as a priority by the 2021 staff survey and capacity and resource remain an issue. It is essential that we allocate resource intelligently and efficiently. The staff survey results provide evidence of disproportionate impacts for our diverse staff groups, for example:
- Having meaningful PDPs is much more important to Black / Black British and Asian / Asian British staff (83% and 81% respectively) than the organisation as a whole (65%)
 - Disabled staff responded less positively to most questions compared with the whole organisation, but their responses have improved overall since the 2019 survey
 - Bisexual staff are less likely to agree the organisation takes the issues of bullying, harassment and discrimination seriously (64%) compared with the organisation as a whole (69%)
- 3.7 In collaboration with our workers fora, we are using the staff survey results and other data to inform and target future actions in the right place, including:
- Identifying development and pathways into senior roles for staff from under-represented groups

- Further utilising membership of the Business Disability Forum to support policy reviews and training commission
- Developing awareness and language around gender and sexual orientation

2021 Pay gap reporting

- 3.8 The council published its voluntary 2020 ethnicity pay gap report (see Appendix II) in line with ONS guidelines for ethnic origin groupings. Following this report, committee instructed officers to publish subsequent ethnicity pay gap reporting with more detailed data analysis, and in line with the gender pay gap reporting schedule.
- 3.9 To give this due consideration and resource, the council requires adequate time to engage with key stakeholders and ensure the data is reported in a meaningful way. Current corporate workforce profile data indicates that the council is likely to report positive ethnicity and disability pay gaps
- 3.10 Actions to address these inequalities have been identified in this report (see above points 3.5 – 3.7) and are being monitored through the council's co-created Fair & Inclusive Action Plan.

4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options

- 4.1 The progress outlined above is on previously Member agreed work under the Fair & Inclusive Action Plan and petitions accepted by committees, as well as commitments in the anti-racist pledge.

5. Community engagement and consultation

- 5.1 The council's Corporate Equality Delivery Group meets every six weeks and oversees progress of the FIAP. Membership of this group includes our workers fora, Trade Unions and other stakeholders. Representatives from the workers fora are also involved in working groups for the various activities within the FIAP, for example the IT&D Accessibility workstream. We also continue to work with the P&R BME standing invitee.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The council is maintaining steady progress in diversifying its workforce and has identified the need for further action to achieve proportionate representation in senior roles.
- 6.2 The council has built trust with its workers fora and we remain committed to collaborating with them, our trade unions, communities and other key stakeholders to achieve our commitment to being a fair and inclusive place to work. This approach should minimise risks to the successful delivery of the fair and inclusive programme.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications resulting from the recommendations of this report. Current and planned actions to address employment outcomes for diverse staff groups can be accommodated within approved budgets. Any actions that resulted in changes with consequent financial implications for the council would be brought to Policy & Resources Committee for approval.

Name of finance officer consulted: James Hengeveld Date consulted (09/03/2022):

8. Legal implications

- 8.1 The Council as a public authority is under a legal duty to ensure compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty which is covered below. In accordance with section 78 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council is only required to publish gender pay gap reports. However, the Council is under no statutory duty to publish ethnicity or disability pay gap reports, therefore there is no risk of non-compliance in regards to these additional pay gap reports which have been produced.

Name of lawyer consulted: Carol Haynes Date consulted (23/02/22):

9. Equalities implications

- 9.1 A part of the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010, the council must seek to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- 9.2 All staff must be confident that they can be themselves at work and feel valued and a sense of belonging, supported by an inclusive culture that identifies and removes barriers and creates opportunities and career development and progression.

- 9.3 The co-created Fair & Inclusive Action Plan has clearly defined actions delivered in collaboration with key stakeholders. It will support all these aims and bring benefits to council employees as well as to the reputation of, and trust and confidence in the council across the city.

Name of equalities officer consulted: Emma McDermott Date consulted (09/03/2022):

10. Sustainability implications

- 10.1 None identified.

Supporting Documentation

1. Appendices

1. Workforce Equalities Report 2020-21
2. Ethnicity Pay Gap Report 2020 - 21