



Building a Better Bournemouth



EQUALITY
FRAMEWORK
FOR LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
EXCELLENT

Better for All Strategy 2017 - 2019



Foreword

We are proud to have been rated as Excellent under the Equality Framework for Local Government in 2016, a national benchmark coordinated by the Local Government Association. This is based on five performance areas for which we were judged to be Excellent: knowing our communities; leadership, partnership and organisational commitment; involving our communities; responsive services and customer care; and a skilled and committed workforce.

We are now pleased to share Bournemouth Council's revised Equality Strategy which sets out our ambition and commitment over the next two years as we embark on the next phase of a continuing journey to improve equity in participation and outcomes for our residents, customers, visitors and the people who work for you through us.

Bournemouth Council is committed to "Building a Better Bournemouth that is Better for all". We will do this by tackling the root causes of inequality rather than by reacting to symptoms associated with it. We will achieve our objectives by actively promoting equality of opportunity through our approach to commissioning, policy development, delivery of our services and our employment practices.

We will strive to achieve the best outcomes for our residents taking account of individual needs, and recognise that increased diversity in our workforce will contribute to us employing the best people. One of our objectives is to have a workforce that broadly reflects the profile of the communities we serve.

Our challenge is to ensure we target the finite resources at our disposal in the most effective and efficient manner possible to meet ever growing demands. It is particularly important that we focus our efforts on protecting our frontline services and vulnerable people and places which are the most disadvantaged.

Whilst we are proud of our achievements to date in embedding the principles of fairness and equality of opportunity in our day to day business. We are not complacent and will continue to tackle inequality and disadvantage wherever we can to develop the principles of inclusive growth.

We would like to thank Bournemouth's residents, and our partners as well as our Councillors and staff for sharing their views, ideas and experiences in shaping this strategy. We have used what you have told us to shape our equality objectives and priorities over the next two years.



Jane Portman
Managing Director



Councillor
Jane Kelly

Introduction

The Legal Background

The purpose of Bournemouth Council's Equality Strategy is to set out our Equality Objectives; vision, approach, key activities and monitoring arrangements in relation to tackling inequality across Bournemouth. It outlines how we will advance equality, improve life chances, tackle discrimination and promote positive relations between different communities and groups and what we will do to move towards a workforce that is more representative of the communities we serve.

This strategy is informed by research and data, as well as evidence gathered through public engagement and sets out how we arrived at our equality objectives.

The Equality Act 2010 places a **General Duty** on all public service providers which includes Bournemouth Council to give due regard to:



Equality Act 2010

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant characteristic and those who do not
3. Foster good relations between people

The law applies to the provision of goods, services, employment and training and can be enforced upon anyone who is delivering a public service and applies whether they are a public-sector organisation or not.

To comply with this duty Bournemouth Council may find it necessary on occasions to treat some people more favourably than others.

We may where appropriate consider "more favourable treatment" for certain groups or individuals and are entitled to do so providing this is within the boundaries of the law, for example, by providing targeted services for Adult or Children's Social Care to meet an identified need.

Our Corporate Equality and Diversity Policy can be accessed at: -

<http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/councildemocratic/EqualityDiversity/AboutEqualityDiversity.aspx>

Specific Duty

- In addition to the **General Duty**, Bournemouth Council also has a Specific Duty which requires us to: Publish equality data in a way that makes it easy for people to access
- Publish equality objectives which are specific and measurable and based on published evidence

What we have achieved

The Council was accredited by the Local Government Association as being an Excellent Local Authority in January 2016 for its performance on equality across the following areas:

- Knowing our communities
- Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment
- Involving our communities
- Responsive services and customer care
- A skilled and committed workforce

Bournemouth Council faces several challenges in the delivery of the services it provides owing to large variations in the socio-economic profile of the local community and the very distinct residential areas within the town.

A Strategic Assessment of Boscombe in 2011 and refreshed in 2015, identified several equality issues, which formed the basis of our regeneration plan. The area boasts the most ethnically diverse population across the town and is also our most transient community. The original assessment found that deprivation levels were worsening and were likely to deteriorate further without intervention. Residents experienced worse outcomes on a range of variables when compared to other areas within the borough or when compared to the same variables nationally.

Our Vision

To be a top performing, efficient council, leading Bournemouth to greater economic prosperity.



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In January 2016 Bournemouth became the 19th Council out of a total of 353 councils in England to attain the highest national award for its performance on equality from the Local Government Association when we achieved the 'Excellent' level of the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG).

Our commitment to equality of opportunity is second to none and we use our community leadership role to assist in keeping hate crime to a minimum across the borough. We are proud to be members of Prejudice Free Dorset and work closely with our public-sector partners and local community groups such as DOTs Disability, Dorset Race Equality Council, Unity in Vision and Faith Links. We are determined to live up to our commitment to Build a better Bournemouth, a town in which people can live free from prejudice and discrimination and achieve their full potential by embracing these principles.

In 2016 all our service directors signed up as ‘Straight Allies’. According to Stonewall¹ This role is critical in creating gay-friendly workplaces and in advancing fair treatment of lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and trans staff.

We celebrate the diversity of our residents and demonstrate our respect for difference through our participation in a range of events including, LGB&T History Month, International Day Against Homophobia, International Women’s Day, Disability History Month, Older Peoples Day, Black History Month and International Men’s Day among others. We support Children in need, Bourne free and remember Holocaust Memorial Day and the atrocities of Srebrenica.

In March 2017, we accepted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliances’ definition of Antisemitism as adopted by the British Government.

The IHRA’s definition reads: “Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”²

Through this equality strategy we will embrace the principles of “Inclusive Growth” which is defined as “...growth which enables the widest range of people and places to both contribute and benefit from economic success. Our purpose is to achieve more prosperity alongside greater equity in opportunities and outcomes...”³for our residents

Background

Situated on the south coast, Bournemouth, together with Poole and Christchurch, form the South West region’s second largest principal urban area. The borough is divided into 18 wards and renowned for award winning gardens and sandy beaches as well as language schools and its universities. We are a Fairtrade Town with a growing reputation for our environmental credentials and have a strong national and international reputation as a holiday resort, conference venue, finance and insurance hub, as well as a Centre for education.

We are a Conservative led Council and are among the largest employer in the town, with significant numbers employed within the finance, and tourism industries. In 2006, the Bournemouth Tourism Management Board was set up to “develop and assist delivery of a shared vision for a prosperous tourism industry within the town to enable the borough to develop further as a market leading resort.” This was the Country’s first board to represent all sectors of the visitor economy including the often overlooked, but vital, services of transportation, entertainment and retail.

In summary, the key characteristics which define Bournemouth are the:

- Cosmopolitan makeup and outlook
- Natural and leisure environments
- Seven miles of golden beaches
- Rich culture including theatres, arts, history and buildings
- Vibrant tourism, hospitality and night time economies
- Financial and service sectors, colleges, Universities and language schools

¹ Stonewall campaigns for the equality of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people across Britain.

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/a-definition-of-antisemitism>

³ Inclusive Growth Commission: Emerging Findings September 2016

- Growing digital economy

In a period of austerity through proactive leadership and careful planning we have managed to stimulate and encourage inward investment in the town.



Strong partnerships have been established with Morgan Sindall and Bournemouth Development Company which we have used to kick start our regeneration program. We have increased the number of affordable homes in the borough and continue to improve existing ones.

We have funded new capital schemes, such as dementia care accommodation and special educational needs. The medium to long term show a continued trend towards an older population, especially the numbers of over 85s. As ill-health increases with age, this is the main challenge for local health and adult social care services.

Our Priorities:

- Developing the future of Local Government in Bournemouth
- An Efficient Council
- An Active Community
- An Improving Environment
- A Thriving Economy

<http://bournemouth.gov.uk/councildemocratic/AboutYourCouncil/PlansandPerformance/CorporatePlan.aspx>

Our Diversity Promise

We will:

- provide fair access to our services
- be socially inclusive
- be open and transparent in all we do
- value our customers and staff by treating them fairly and with dignity and respect
- strive to make this promise a reality and aim to improve quality of life whilst working towards achieving the Council's priorities

Better for All - Equality Objectives

The Equality Objectives set out in this equality strategy is mainly informed by our Administrative priorities, as well as the findings from the Bournemouth Opinion Survey.

Our Equality Objectives

- Improve choice and satisfaction for service users
- Provide affordable housing in partnership with stakeholders
- Improve the life chances of young people in Bournemouth
- Improve health and wellbeing by reducing health inequality
- Improve accessibility to services and public spaces
Improve people's feeling of safety by reducing both isolation and the fear of anti-social behaviour
- Use our community leadership role to minimise and prevent extremism
- Increase community engagement and involvement in decision making
- Increase equality of outcomes through inclusive growth.

Useful links/information

Bournemouth opinion survey:

<http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/councildemocratic/GetInvolvedHaveyoursay/Documents/bournemouthopinionsurvey2015.pdf>

2011 Census:

<http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/councildemocratic/Statistics/Census/2011Census.aspx>