

Bolton Council: equality information (January, 2014)

1. The Public Sector Equality Duty

Under the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act'), the council has a general duty to have "due regard" to:

- 1) Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- 2) Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- 3) Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic¹ and people who do not share it

The council also has to meet specific duties, in order to demonstrate its compliance with the general Equality Duty:

- 1) Publish information to show how the council is complying with the Equality Duty. This information should be published (at least) annually. This second publication of this information will take place 31st January, 2013.
- 2) Set and publish equality objectives at least every four years².

This document presents information to show how the council complies with the general Equality Duty as a community leader, a service provider, and an employer. Within this, we have sought to provide relevant and proportionate information. Rather than replicate detailed data here, the document contains links to other sources of information. This document will be refreshed every year to ensure that our policy and practice takes into account national and local priorities. This is the January 2014 published version.

2. Our communities

Bolton is home to around 276,800 people³, who live in and around the borough's eight distinct townships. It is a diverse and vibrant borough, with a real mix of people who live in, work in, study in and visit Bolton.

A wealth of data about our population is available, and key information is available on the [Statistics and Census Information page](#) of our website. A summary regarding the diversity of our population is provided below.

The majority of residents in Bolton (83%) describe themselves as white British or from another white background. We have a large black and minority ethnic (BME) population, with 17% of residents considering themselves to be part of non-white ethnic groups. Bolton has sizeable Indian and Pakistani communities. In the 2011 Census these communities accounted for 7.8% and 4.3% of the population

¹ The Equality and Human Rights Commission's definitions of protected characteristics can be found at the following [link](#)

² Bolton's Equality Policy (published in January, 2012) is available at the following [link](#)

³ Source: *Bolton's 2011 Census information* can be found at the following [link](#) and [here](#) at the Office for National Statistics Website

respectively. In addition, Bolton is home to a number of new and emerging communities, who have settled in Bolton through economic migration; or Britain's refugee and asylum arrangements. Christianity is the predominant religion in the borough with 63% of residents identifying as Christians. Islam and Hinduism are also major faiths (12% and 2% of the population, respectively). 17% of residents identify as having no religion.

The age profile of Bolton is similar to that of England, but the proportion of children is slightly higher; and the proportion of working age and older people is slightly lower. However, Bolton for the most part closely follows trends in age groups for both Greater Manchester and England and Wales.

Disability and ill-health are important concerns for our residents. In the 2011 census, 20% of residents said they had a limiting long-term illness or disability. In the region of 11% of the population cares for someone with a long-term illness or disability.

As well as being home to a range of different communities, Bolton is also socio-economically diverse. While parts of the borough are amongst the most affluent in the country, around one quarter of the borough is amongst the 15% most deprived areas in the country⁴. For the council and its partners, reducing socio-economic disadvantage is therefore an essential part of our work to reduce inequality and to improve the quality of life for everyone in the Bolton Family.

3. Eliminating discrimination; and promoting equality of opportunity within our services

3.1 Our Vision: Bolton's Community Strategy

Bolton has a long history of strong and collaborative partnership working, focused on improving the quality of life for everyone in the Bolton Family. This is led by the Bolton Vision Partnership, which is made up of leaders from the public, private and voluntary, community and faith sector ('the voluntary sector'), and Elected Members.

In recent times, the economic environment and public service context has changed fundamentally – economic growth continues to be a challenging national issue; public sector funding is significantly reduced and public service reform continue at a time when demand is increasing. The Vision Partnership has responded to this changed context by balancing a strong sense of ambition for Bolton and its people with a realistic assessment of what can be achieved.

The Partnership wants the Borough to be a place where everyone is able to fulfil their potential, regardless of their background and their beliefs. However, we recognise that outcomes do vary across different parts of the borough and across different communities. Reducing inequality is therefore at the heart of the partnership's work.

⁴ Source: *Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2010*. An analysis of this is available on Bolton's Council's website, at the following [link](#)

To respond to this challenging context the Partnership agreed a Community Strategy for 2012/13 -14/15⁵. It sets out an enduring commitment to do the right thing for Bolton and, most importantly, for Bolton's most vulnerable residents. The Council's equality objectives are at the heart of the borough's Strategy, which focuses on a number of priorities and cross cutting issues which are the focus of particular partnership attention:

Priority themes

- Prosperous
- Health and well being
- Children and young people
- Clean and green
- Safe
- Stronger

Cross-cutting issues

- Aspiration
- Alcohol
- Skills
- Complex families
- Cohesion
- Anti-poverty

A detailed delivery plan sits behind the strategy, and sets out the particular outcomes which the partnership will seek to deliver. These include, for example, improving life expectancy in our most deprived areas; reducing child poverty; supporting children who are in care to fulfil their potential; reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, particularly in our most deprived areas, and supporting the victims of crime.

The cross cutting issues are a major focus for partners. These are so fundamental to the quality of life of our residents that if progress can be made, the implications for the people of Bolton could be significant. They are amongst the most challenging we face and there is not an obvious and easy solution. The partnership agreed a specific focus on a small range of very complex issues when they refreshed the community strategy in 2012, the following highlights progress between then and now:

- **Alcohol** - Drinking alcohol is a part of modern life for many people. In moderation, it is not harmful, and it can also make a significant contribution to the local economy. However, when it is consumed excessively, alcohol can contribute to poor health, low life expectancy, and crime and disorder. It can therefore have a negative impact for individuals and the town as a whole. The Alcohol Strategy, approved in June 2013, addresses issues related to health prevention, licensing and enforcement alongside the need to rebalance the town centre offer so that it is welcoming to everyone. Significant activity is underway including the pubwatch scheme, ageing well programme and alcohol diversion scheme.
- **Aspiration and Skills** – Developing the right level and mix of skills locally is important for Bolton, since this will help to maximise the employability and competitiveness of local people. This is particularly important for Bolton in keeping pace with Greater Manchester and the rest of the country. An All Age Skills Strategy has been developed in partnership with the College and other public, private and voluntary sector organisations to develop the right level and mix of skills locally. The 'Team Bolton' partnership have 111 employers signed up to the skills pledge which has so far resulted in 80 job offers and the education zone is due for completion in Spring 2014. A number of new

⁵ Bolton's Community Strategy, *Bolton: Our Vision 2012-15*, can be found at this [link](#)

apprenticeship opportunities have come through as well as pre-employment training opportunities helping secure additional job opportunities from employers.

- Family First- Partners are involved in a national project to work with some of our families with the most complex needs. These families require significant support from agencies such as the council, police and other agencies. This programme provides partners with a significant opportunity to make an impact on some of the most important – and most difficult – outcomes locally. Partners are currently working with 300 families to turn their lives around and help them make positive contributions to their own communities. Additionally, working links will be made across other priority areas within the public service reform agenda including early years and health.
- Cohesion- Bolton has a longstanding partnership approach to building strong and cohesive communities. Much of this is delivered through mainstream services to support our priorities such as the work undertaken within Neighbourhood Renewal areas to improve outcomes for these communities. Partners in Bolton demonstrate a strong commitment to promoting cohesion and this can be seen through the Faith Leaders' Forum and One Bolton events.
- Anti-poverty – In response to the ongoing impact of reduced public spending and the effect of policy changes, including welfare reforms, the council has approved a series of measures as part of £1m fund to support anti-poverty. The aim is to put in place an infrastructure to prevent people getting to a point of crisis or need. Firstly, the council aims to set up a high street presence, along with the Bolton credit union, Hoot, offering the purchase of white goods at an affordable price and rate of interest. The council will also be providing more advocates and advisors for those struggling with the new disability payments introduced by the Government, providing more money skills and debt advice and supporting credit union to extend its opening hours and to set up its first transactional account, which will work like a bank account.

Performance on Bolton's priorities and cross cutting issues is reported on a bi-annual basis – this is discussed further in section 3.2.

3.2 Our business: equality, business planning and decision making

The Council continues to operate a robust approach to decision making and business planning, with strong and informed political leadership from Elected Members. This process is driven by the Community Strategy's aims of economic prosperity and narrowing the gap.

The Cabinet's philosophy towards the council's budget setting and business planning activity emphasises a firm focus on protecting Bolton's most vulnerable people and meeting our statutory duties. The most recent strategic Equality Impact Assessment

(EIA) which accompanied the council's 2013/15 savings options report⁶ and the updated Financial Forecast 2013/15⁷ (which detailed the additional savings required due to a further reduction in government grant) continued to maintain a commitment to limiting the impact on the Borough's most vulnerable and delivering on council priorities. However, this will need to be considered in the context of a much reduced controllable. Set out below is an initial 'high level' assessment of what the organisation's priorities and shape may look like in this context

- A strong focus on creating the conditions to deliver economic growth for the borough and local people
- Clear co-ordination and leadership of the totality of public services in Bolton to maximises the use of all public resources in a joined-up way. This is very important given the totality of the reductions in public services across Bolton
- Ensuring that services for the most vulnerable children and adults especially in relation to the council's responsibilities for safeguarding continue to be met
- Ensuring that we maintain at least the statutory minimum level of provision for services across the council
- Targeting the remaining resources for universal services to either support economic growth and where possible to continue to at least 'maintain' or 'narrow the gap'

There is, therefore, a clear strategic framework for the targeting of the council's resources in line with Bolton's priority outcomes. The remainder of the council's business planning process is designed to support detailed budget allocations and inform the subsequent size and shape of our services:

The *Medium term financial strategy* sets out the council's financial forecast, and provides financial guidance to services⁸.

Divisional Service Plans explain how services will deliver their budgets, and how they will contribute to the achievement of Bolton's priorities.

Personal development reviews help staff to identify the development and support they need to help deliver Bolton's priorities.

In addition, there are several other tools which the council uses as to understand and manage the performance of its services as well as ensuring an integrated approach to equalities and CBPP. These include:

Performance management of progress against Bolton's priorities. This is an essential part of how the council holds itself to account, and includes reporting of performance to Cabinet Members; Scrutiny Committees⁹, and the wider partnership.

⁶ The Strategic EIA of the 2014/16 savings options report (dated 17 Feb, 2014) is available on the Committee section of the council's website, at this [link](#)

⁷ The updated Financial Forecast for 2014/15 and 2015/16 (dated 17 Feb, 2014) is available on the Committee section of the council's website, at this [link](#)

⁸ The financial forecast for 2013/14 – 2016/17 is available on the Committee section of the council's website, at this [link](#)

⁹ Corporate Performance reports are taken on a bi-annual basis, and are available on the Committee section of the council's website. This can be searched at the following [link](#)

Equality Impact Assessments are used to identify the potential impacts of a policy, budgetary, or other key decision before it is made; and therefore to support the council's decision makers in making informed choices¹⁰. Relevant actions arising from completed EIAs are incorporated into service plans and monitored through departmental and corporate arrangements. This ensures that equalities is considered not only when a policy is developed and decided upon but also when it is being implemented. In 2011 the council reviewed its EIA toolkit and updated the templates and guidance provided to staff in line with the Equality Act 2010. EIAs are integral to the council's Savings and Efficiency Programme, which is a key part of the budget process. The Strategic EIA, which accompanies the budget report, also assesses the cumulative and combined impact of changing a number of policies.

The council's *procurement and commissioning* arrangements include considerations around equality matters. Some contracts/service areas have a greater relevance to equality matters than others and for this reason an outcomes focus is an important part of our work¹¹.

3.3 Our customers: understanding need

The council and its partners are data rich, and this enables us to ensure that our services are based on a solid understanding of customer need. We use a wide range of data and intelligence to achieve this – this is not solely a statistical exercise.

It is important to stress that the council does not routinely collect the demographic information of all customers, since such a blanket approach may be considered to be disproportionate. Instead, information is requested where it is relevant and appropriate for the service being accessed. We feel that this is appropriate within the context of the government's Best Value Statutory Guidance¹².

The sections below explain the types of data which the council uses to plan its services and respond to customer need.

3.3.1 Performance data

As set out in section 3.2, the delivery of the outcomes in the Community Strategy forms a major part of how the council holds itself to account in relation to improving outcomes for local people. Performance management takes place with the council's Cabinet Members, Scrutiny Committees, and the wider partnership¹³.

The council's services have access to a wealth of demographic and operational information, which is used to inform service delivery. The type of information varies based on the nature of the service, and helps the council to make sure that its

¹⁰ EIAs are published alongside the reports to which they relate. Reports can be searched on the Committee section of the council's website, available at this [link](#)

¹¹ More information about procurement is available on the Tenders and Contracts section of the council's website, available at this [link](#)

¹² Paragraph 3 of the *Best Value Statutory Guidance*, published by the Department for Communities and Local Government in September 2011 states, "In the interests of economy and efficiency, it is not necessary for authorities to undertake lifestyle or diversity questionnaires of suppliers or residents."

¹³ An update on community strategy outcomes including outturn for 2012/13 is available at this [link](#)

services are appropriate for local need. For example, Bolton's JSNA describes the health and wellbeing needs of local people and provides the key evidence for the development of local strategies along with the commissioning of services to support individual's needs and address and improve the populations' health.

Similarly, analysis of school attainment results shows us where particular children or schools may need additional support to enhance achievement. Intelligence data usage also helps the council to undertake customer segmentation. This helps the council to direct information to customer groups, for example by making customers aware of their eligibility for free home energy efficiency measures through the Get Me Toasty campaign.

The examples given above show how information is used to respond to the particular needs of individual service users, but operational data is also used more generally, to respond to the changing shape of or demand for services. This is used to inform Divisional Service Plans, and EIAs, which are both discussed in section 3.2.

3.3.2 *Satisfaction and complaints*

The council has access to data from a number of regular satisfaction surveys undertaken by the council and its partners (e.g. Adults Social Care Survey, surveys conducted by Greater Manchester Police). These surveys help us understand how people are feeling. In addition to this, the council consult on specific issues using a variety of methods including its own e-view (electronic residents) panel.

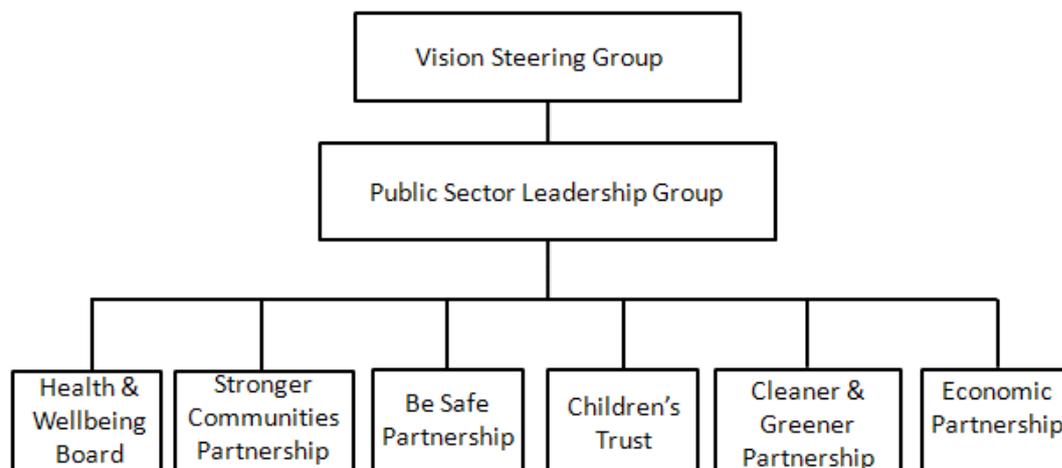
Public fora such as Area Forums enable residents to ask questions, make comments and complaints to council staff and partners including the Police and Fire Services. Staff who work out in our communities, such as Neighbourhood Managers, are also well placed to help our communities to engage with and influence decisions which matter to them.

The council also monitors customer feedback through its customer contact system; from issues raised by local MPs and councillors on behalf of their constituents; and through the council's formal complaints process. This sets out the council's Customer Promise and its standards for customer care. Analysis of complaints, comments and compliments is undertaken which enables us to identify patterns of customer experience, and respond accordingly.

3.3.3 *Partnerships, consultation and engagement*

As set out in section 3.1, Bolton has a long history of strong partnership working, which is led by the Bolton Vision Partnership. Partnership activity in Bolton has a clear direction, as set out in the Community Strategy. It also provides a solid infrastructure for engagement and collaboration across the public, private, and voluntary sector in Bolton. This is structured around the partnership's priority themes.

This structure is set out below.



As well as the formal partnership infrastructure, the council engages with a range of organisations and interest groups on matters of particular relevance. These groups include, but are not exclusive to, the Faith Leaders' Forum; the Disability Partnership, Healthwatch and the Carers' Impact Group. This, along with work within our neighbourhoods, provides opportunities for people from across Bolton to contribute to and influence decisions which are important to them.

In addition, appropriate and effective consultation is an important part of the work the council is undertaking to make savings and fundamentally reshape the organisation. Stakeholder consultations are tailored to individual reviews as they come forward, and the views gathered through the consultations inform the development of the reviews and associated Equality Impact Assessments.

3.4 Our outcomes: making a difference

Over the past four years progress has been made to further embed equality practice throughout the council. This section outlines some of our achievements in the last year.

Throughout section 3, we have sought to demonstrate how the council's core business – including that which it undertakes in partnership – is underpinned by the aim of reducing disadvantage and improving the quality of life for people in Bolton. We have explained the clear political and partnership leadership for this work; set out how concerns around economic prosperity, narrowing the gap and vulnerability guide the council's strategic decisions; and how matters of equality are integrated into the council's business planning process.

Despite the challenging conditions in which the council and its partners are now operating, much has been achieved in recent years to improve the quality of life for people in Bolton. This is set out in *Bolton: Our Vision 2012-15* and a summary of some of the milestones to date are as follows:

- People are living longer than ever before, the average life expectancy in Bolton continues to increase and is now 76.5 years for men and 80.6 for women.
- Bolton's young people have made significant achievements in recent years, particularly at GCSE, this year 60.2% of pupils achieved 5 GCSE grades A*-C including English and Maths – better than the England average of 58.8%.
- Total crime in Bolton continues to decrease over time; the outturn position was 2% better than the previous year.
- Performance has generally been maintained for clean and green indicators, despite budget savings in this area. Positive results should be noted in respect of increasing the amount of waste diverted from landfill (from 28.2% to 30.7%) and improving recycling rates.

4. Eliminating discrimination; and promoting equality of opportunity within our workforce

4.1 Organisational culture and support

The council strives to create a culture where diversity is respected and celebrated. Our practices as an employer are underpinned by a clear policy framework, which recognises our obligations of eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation; promoting equality of opportunity; and ensuring fair treatment for all staff. This includes an equality proofed pay and grading structure¹⁴.

Delivering quality and accessible services would not be possible without staff who have an understanding of Bolton's communities, and an appreciation of the need for responsive services and strong customer care. Our staff are a major asset, and the council recognises the importance of providing effective support and training – evidenced by our Investor in People status¹⁵. A Personal Development Review (PDR) for all staff is a key part of the council's business planning process, and a range of training is on offer to support staff in delivering the council's priorities. The council does not presently monitor the take up of training and development by protected characteristic. This is determined by service and individual need.

¹⁴ Bolton Council's Equality Policy Statement is available on the Equalities and Diversity section of the Council's website, at this [link](#)

¹⁵ A report setting out the messages from Bolton's 2011 IiP inspection and associated action plan is available on the Committee section of the council's website, at this [link](#). The assessment will be undertaken again in 2014.

Equality naturally features within the council's training programme. It features within training for senior managers and training on specific equality matters is also delivered as required, for example training on Equality Impact Assessments is part of training for project managers as part of the Savings and Efficiency programme. A new e-learning training package is being developed and will be available for all staff in 2014.

The council undertakes a staff survey every two years, to understand how people feel about working for the council. The most recent staff survey was completed in 2012¹⁶ and 81% of respondents agreed that the council was committed to equality and diversity. 82% of respondents agreed that the council respected individual differences. Both these responses were slightly higher than in recent years.

4.2 The financial context and workforce implications

It must be stressed that these are difficult times for the public sector. The squeeze on public sector finances means that the council's budget is reducing in size, and its workforce is subsequently also reducing.

The council has invested significant effort in managing this reduction and minimising compulsory redundancies. External recruitment has all but stopped; vacancy management has been used extensively; and all staff have been offered voluntary severance (VS) and voluntary early retirement (VER). In the last 4 years, the council has managed to secure a reduction of over 1000 posts, all through voluntary means.

The council aims to have a workforce which is broadly representative of the local population in the long-term. The council presently has very little influence over the organisation's overall workforce composition. This is due to the fact that the workforce has been shaped significantly by voluntary leavers; and because opportunities for external recruitment are presently extremely limited.

Some potential remains for staff to move within the workforce as a whole, primarily through opportunities for redeployment and internal recruitment. To date we have redeployed over 90 members of staff as part of comprehensive redeployment process. This may have some influence in the short and medium-term on how the workforce – and particular groups within the workforce – is distributed, for example across roles or grades.

In addition, the council is developing with its partners and the local business community an Employer Pledge to advance opportunities for local people to improve their skills and employment potential¹⁷. To date over 120 employers have signed up. This is aimed at all sections of the community but is particularly beneficial for the borough's young people. Related to this, the council has committed to providing a number of apprenticeship opportunities and has offered 25 apprenticeships grade 1 (above minimum wage) and work placements.¹⁸

¹⁶ A report setting out the findings of Bolton's staff survey 2012 is available on the Committee section of the council's website, at this [link](#). The survey will be repeated in early 2014.

¹⁷ Bolton's All-Age Skills Strategy is available on the Committee section of the Council's website, at this [link](#)

¹⁸ Proposals regarding the council's apprenticeship scheme were presented to the Executive on 9 January 2012, and are available at the following [link](#)

The council monitors the changing shape of its workforce as part of its Savings and Efficiency programme, and publishes the key information in its strategic EIAs of the budget¹⁹.

4.3 Workforce profile

Information about the council's workforce profile is regularly refreshed through a voluntary staff audit. The profile of the council's workforce as of 31 December 2013 is set out below. Unless otherwise stated most of these details are broadly similar to the previous workforce data published in January 2013. Where there is a significant change this has been commented upon. This data relates only to staff directly employed by the council and information has been kept at headline level, so as not to breach data protection rules or to risk identifying individuals.²⁰

The information provided in this section comes from a range of data sources e.g. age, salary, full/part time, length of service and gender is from the council's Oracle system. Other data (ethnicity, disability, religion, sexual identity and caring responsibilities) is self-reported collected via a form.

Total employment; length of service; and grades:

- The council directly employs 4,659 people in 4,902 posts; figures below are based on the number of posts
- Almost half the workforce (48%) works part-time, and just over half works full-time (52%)
- 61% of employees are on grades 1-6 (earning £12-24,000).
- 31% of employees are on grades 6-10 (earning £24-36,000).
- 6% of employees are on grades 10-14 (earning £36-48,000)
- 1% of employees are on Senior Manager grades (earning £48,000 and above)
- In 2013, a third of employees had worked for the council for five years or less, compared with half of employees in 2012
- 70% of employees have worked for the council for 5 years or more, with 41% having served for more than ten years

Gender:

- 72% of the workforce is female; and 28% male
- 58% of full-time employees are female
- 87% of part-time employees are female
- Women tend to be employed on a lower grade than men, 63% earning £24,000 or less compared to 58% of men, although 64% of the top 8% earners are female
- Matters around gender reassignment are not discussed here, given the relative rarity and sensitivity of such cases

Age:

¹⁹ The Strategic EIA of the 2014/16 savings options report (dated 17 Feb, 2014) is available on the Committee section of the council's website, at this [link](#)

²⁰ The data does not include information about schools or agency staff. Information on the schools workforce will be published separately under the government's schools workforce audit.

- The council's workforce is generally older than the workforce population in Bolton as a whole, as set out below.
- Less than 1% of employees are aged 21 or under (compared to 6% in Bolton)
- 8% of employees are aged 22-30 years (compared to 20%)
- 19% of employees are aged 31-40 years (compared to 27%)
- 35% of employees are aged 41-50 years (compared to 23%)
- 31% of employees are aged 51-60 years (compared to 20%)
- 6% of employees are aged 61 and above (compared to 5%)
- 79% of employees aged 21 or under are part-time (although numbers are small)
- The majority of employees (70%) aged over 60 are part-time
- 93% of employees who are aged 21 or below have been with the council for five years or less whereas 47% of employees aged 41 or over have been with the council for over 10 years

Disability:

- Data regarding disability is not held for 10% of the council's employees

Of those employees we hold data for:

- 3% consider themselves to have a disability. (In the 2011 Census 20% of Bolton's residents said they had a limiting long-term illness or disability²¹) and 97% do not consider themselves to have a disability
- 62% of staff who have a disability work full-time, compared with 53% of staff without a disability
- There is good retention of staff who consider themselves to have a disability – 45% of staff from this group have been with the council for over ten years
- 7% of those who consider themselves to have a disability are in the top 8% of earners

Ethnicity:

- Data regarding ethnicity is not held for 6% of the council's employees

Of those employees we hold data for:

- 91% describe themselves as White (White British or belonging to a white minority ethnic group). This compares with 83% in Bolton as a whole
- 9% describe themselves as belonging to a black or minority ethnic (BME) group. This compares with 17% in Bolton as a whole
- 58% of staff from BME groups work part time compared to 47% White.
- A higher than average proportion of employees from BME groups have been with the council for 5-10 years (40% compared to 28% White)
- A smaller proportion of employees from BME groups have been with the council for over ten years (30% compared to 43% White)
- 3% of the top 8% earners are from BME groups

Religion:

- Data regarding religion is not held for 11% of the council's employees

Of those employees that have provided data:

- 73% are Christian (compared to 63% in Bolton)
- 9% are from other faiths (compared to 14% in Bolton)

²¹ This was around 40% in the Bolton Health and Wellbeing Survey 2010. *Bolton's 2011 Census information* can be found at the following [link](#) and [here](#) at the Office for National Statistics Website.

- 18% of employees have no religion (compared to 17% in Bolton)

Sexuality

- Data regarding sexuality is not held for 35% of the council's employees
- Of those employees that have provided data:
- 2% are Gay, Lesbian or bi-sexual
 - 98% are heterosexual

Caring status:

- Data regarding caring status is not held for 12% of the council's employees
- Of those employees that have provided data:

- 44% of employees have no caring responsibilities
- 56% of employees have caring responsibilities

Of employees with caring responsibilities:

- 17% care for adults
- 73% care for children
- 10% care for both adults and children
- 51% of those with caring responsibilities work part-time, compared to 44% of employees who do not have caring responsibilities.
- There is good retention of staff with caring responsibilities - 47% have been with the council for over ten years. This shows a slight increase compared to 2012 when this figure was 39%.
- 62% of the top 8% earners have caring responsibilities
- Flexible working policies are in place to support staff with caring responsibilities. All employees are now able to apply to reduce their working hours on a permanent or temporary basis in line with the council's Flexible Working Policy and the needs of the service.

Pregnancy and maternity:

- Women who require maternity leave (and men who require paternity leave) are supported in line with the council's human resources policy framework.

Marriage and civil partnership:

- The relationship status of the council's workforce is not routinely collected

4.4 Leavers, and the changing shape of our workforce

The profile of the council's workforce changes on an ongoing basis as a result of staff turnover.

Between 1st January and 31 December 2013, 371 people left the employment of the council, of these:

- 43% took voluntary severance, voluntary early retirement or voluntary redundancies. This is a slight increase on 2011.
- 37% resigned
- 2% were on fixed term contracts which came to an end
- 9% retired
- 5% were dismissed
- 2% TUPE'D out
- 1% passed away while in the service of the council

As set out in section 4.2, the changing shape of the workforce is monitored through the savings and efficiency programme.

5 Fostering good relations

5.1 Leadership and stronger communities

As discussed throughout this document, Bolton is a diverse borough with a distinct local character and strong community relationships. It is a place where people from all walks of life are welcomed, and where tolerance and respect are strong.

This culture did not come about by accident. Partners from across the public, private, and voluntary sectors are committed to building strong communities. Fostering good relations is a key part of our work to build community and social cohesion across the Bolton Family. It is about making sure that people from across Bolton's communities have a voice, and are able to engage with the council and its partners in order to influence decisions which are important to them. More information about engagement is set out in section 3.3.3.

Bolton's Community Strategy, *Bolton: Our Vision 2012-15*, recognises the importance of cohesion as a cross-cutting issue. Strategic leadership is provided by the Vision Steering Group, with support from the Stronger Communities Partnership, which is responsible for creating the conditions in which strong communities can flourish.

One of the biggest contributions to this work is made through the delivery of the partnership's aims of economic prosperity and narrowing the gap. In addition, the work of the Stronger Communities Partnership includes:

- Shaping Bolton's strategy around neighbourhood renewal and narrowing the gap
- Investing in our deprived communities
- Developing the voluntary, community and faith sector and promoting volunteering
- Community cohesion and community relationships
- Anti-poverty strategy and welfare reform

Furthermore, the Faith Leaders Forum contributes towards providing strategic leadership to building social cohesion. The work of the forum includes:

- Stronger and visible leadership with a commitment from faith leaders to attend and contribute in appropriate partnership setting (Vision Steering Group, Stronger Communities Partnership, Voluntary Sector Forum)
- Civic engagement and a commitment to participate in Bolton civic event programmes
- Commitment to provide leadership and participate in key One Bolton events to celebrate the towns diversity ensuring Bolton continues to be a welcoming and tolerant place where everyone – irrespective of their background or belief - is welcome
- Commitment to lead on, support and deliver interfaith activities that promote cohesion

5.2 Stronger communities and the voluntary sector

The voluntary sector makes a significant contribution to the quality of life and relationships within our communities. Voluntary, community and faith organisations are pivotal in building strong, active and cohesive communities in Bolton; and in encouraging people from across the borough to get involved with their community.

Despite the challenges of the current economic conditions, the council and the voluntary sector in Bolton have remained committed to working together to improve the quality of life for local people. However, the council has had to make significant budget savings, which has involved some difficult choices. As part of the council's agreed programme to save £43.6m between 2013 and 2015, the corporate voluntary, community and faith sector funding programme for 2013-15 was reviewed, and £250,000 taken from the programme.²²

A voluntary sector grants pot is operated by Bolton CVS and is focused on helping community and grass root groups..

5.3 Bolton's Events: Celebrating diversity

In Bolton we believe it is important to bring communities together and encourage harmony. Engaging effectively with our communities is central to the success of this work. This section outlines some of our achievements in the last year:

- *International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia, 2013* which was marked by partners including Bolton at Home, Royal Bolton Hospital, the University of Bolton, Bolton CVS and Bolton Council
- The *Ironman and Ironkids events* saw 1500 competitors from different ages, backgrounds and nations taking part in the sporting event.
- 5,500 people took part in *Skyride*
- Activities and entertainment to mark *Black History Month*. Events including African drumming, workshops, lectures and talks were held in a range of venues, including schools, community centres, and the University of Bolton
- Bolton Interfaith council and the main faith communities oversaw a number of faith trails within places of worship which schools and other communities accessed
- Hosted the 'To Gypsyland' touring exhibition by Romani artists

In 2014, we look to build on this legacy for Bolton by continuing to work with our partners to ensure that our events are accessible and inviting to all sections of the community.

6 Conclusion

²² A report setting out corporate funding for the voluntary sector is available on the Committee section of the council's website, at this [link](#)

This document acts as the annual refresh of the Equality Information for 2014. The information provided serves to demonstrate how the Council responds to the duties of the Equality Act 2010 as part of its core business.

This document also demonstrates the strong leadership from across the community which underpins the borough's work to reduce disadvantage and to improve the quality of life for everyone in the Bolton family. This is set out clearly in *Bolton: Our Vision 2012-15*, which demonstrates what the council and its partners will do to achieve economic prosperity and narrow the gap in these times of ongoing economic challenge.

Bolton's Community Strategy, *Bolton: Our Vision 2012-15*, is the main means by which we will hold ourselves to account on progress to reduce inequality and improve the quality of life for local people. Bolton's strong partnership leadership will continue to be essential in making progress against these aims, and in supporting our communities to become strong and confident. Performance will be reported regularly to the council's Elected Members and the wider partnership.

We understand that the global economic recession continues to have an impact not only on the council, but on our partners, our customers and our employees as well. In a time of reducing resources, the council has to make some difficult decisions but we continue to seek to make these decisions in a fair and transparent manner, and in line with a clear philosophy, which has the principle of protecting Bolton's most vulnerable at its heart.

Supporting our workforce through these challenges will continue to be important in the coming years. It is also important that the council continues to support its staff to deliver Bolton's aims of economic prosperity and narrowing the gap. As part of this, we must maintain a culture in which diversity is respected and celebrated and in which discrimination, harassment and victimisation are not tolerated.