

## **Bolton Council: equality information (January, 2017)**

### **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 characteristic<sup>1</sup> 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.
- 2) Set and publish equality objectives at least every four years.

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 2017 published version.

### **2. Our communities**

Bolton is home to around 276,800 people<sup>2</sup>, 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 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

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<sup>1</sup> The Equality and Human Rights Commission's definitions of [protected characteristics](#)

<sup>2</sup> Source: *Bolton's 2011 Census information* and [Office for National Statistics Website](#)

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 country<sup>3</sup>. 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**

#### **Our Vision: Bolton 2030**

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 continues at a time when demand is increasing.

The council and partners are currently engaging on the new vision for Bolton 2030 and have recently completed an 'appreciative inquiry' at the Vision Conference in January 2017 which is the start of a deep engagement on the vision for the Borough.

The key elements that have been agreed to date are as follows:

**Our vision:** Built on our pride in our place and the aspirations of and for local people, our vision is to ensure Bolton in 2030 is: **Active, Connected and Prosperous.**

**Our values:** Bolton will be a vibrant place built on strong cohesive communities, successful businesses and healthy, engaged residents. It will be a welcoming place where people choose to study, work and put down roots. **Inclusive, distinctive, decent, warm and friendly.**

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<sup>3</sup> Source: [Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2010](#).

## Vision

Bolton will be a vibrant place, built on strong cohesive communities, successful businesses, and healthy residents. It will be a welcoming place where people choose to study, work and put down roots.

**“Active,  
connected and  
prosperous”**



## Our priorities:



The full detail and action plan that will support this will emerge as a result of the broad and deep engagement programme that we kicked off at the Vision Conference on 31 January 2017

## **Advancing equality of opportunity**

As a large employer in the borough, the council has a significant opportunity to advance equality of opportunity in employment, both as an individual employer and as a member of the employer community in Bolton.

Within the workplace, we believe that having an organisational culture where diversity is respected and supported is essential. To achieve this, central components to our response to the Act are:

- An ongoing commitment to constructive engagement with the Trades' Unions.
- The provision of a comprehensive package of training around equalities matters for all our managers, built into our package of essential skills and knowledge for those in management roles.
- The provision of bespoke initiatives to support diversity and advance equality of opportunity where appropriate. For example, as a council we support Bolton Employability, a partnership between business and education where the goal is to provide on-site work placements for young people with disabilities leading to competitive employment.

As a service provider, we recognise the importance of providing our services on the basis of a firm understanding of customer need. This understanding includes recognition that not all customers have the same level or type of need.

We have extensive and well developed ways of engaging with our partners and with representatives from across our diverse communities, to ensure that we understand the needs of different groups of people within Bolton. This is led at the highest level by Bolton's Vision Partnership, which is made up of representatives of the public, private, and voluntary, community and faith sectors. This is supported by a range of thematic partnership groups and forums through which we engage with the borough's interest groups.

In addition to 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, Bolton LGBT Partnership, the Carers' Impact Group and Healthwatch. 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.

Appropriate and effective consultation is an important part of the work which the council is undertaking to make savings and fundamentally to 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 the associated Equality Impact Assessments.

### 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.

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 2016/17 savings options report<sup>4</sup> 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 budget.

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 services<sup>5</sup>.

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

*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 choices<sup>6</sup>. Relevant actions arising from completed EIAs are incorporated into service plans and

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<sup>4</sup> The Strategic EIA of the 2017/18 savings options report (dated 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2017) is available on the Committee section of the council's website, here: [Savings options report](#)

<sup>5</sup> The financial forecast for 2017– 2019 is available on the Committee section of the council's website, here [Part A report](#) and here [Part B report](#)

<sup>6</sup> 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](#)

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. 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 work<sup>7</sup>.

### **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 Guidance<sup>8</sup>.

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

#### *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.

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<sup>7</sup> More information about procurement is available on the Tenders and Contracts section of the council's website, available at this [link](#)

<sup>8</sup> 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."

### *Partnerships, consultation and engagement*

We have extensive and well developed ways of engaging with our partners and with representatives from across our diverse communities, to ensure that we understand the needs of different groups of people within Bolton. This is led at the highest level by Bolton's Vision Partnership, which is made up of representatives of the public, private, and voluntary, community and faith sectors. This is supported by a range of thematic partnership groups and fora through which we engage with the borough's interest groups.

In addition to 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, Bolton LGBT Partnership, the Carers' Impact Group and Healthwatch. 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.

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.

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:

- Life expectancy; Male life expectancy in Bolton is currently 78.0 years and female life expectancy 81.6 years. The difference between Bolton and England has continued to reduce and over the past two years this has been primarily due to improvements seen in male life expectancy.
- Attainment levels in Bolton are in line with the national average in the Key Stage 2 assessment of reading, writing and mathematics. In Bolton, 54% of

our children are leaving primary school having reached the expected in standard in all three core subjects, compared to 53% across the whole of England. With GCSE results Bolton's score for Attainment 8 is 48.5% compared to a North West average of 49.2% and a national average of 49.9%.

- Although crime generally has risen over the last year compared to 2015, Bolton has not seen increases at the same rate as the wider Greater Manchester area and consistently appears to outperform many of its statistical neighbours in relation to a number of different crime types. Anti-social behaviour has continued on its long term downward trajectory.
- Progress continues on recycling; recent rates show a 0.27% increase in recycling in 2015/16 and 8.58% overall since 2012/13. From April to February 2016/17 the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting was 44.44%, an increase of 5.21% compared to the same period last year.
- The ongoing challenge of the national economic position continues to present us with a challenging operating context. Direct interventions to stimulate the local economy have been a major priority for the Council and its partners over recent years. Specific progress has included work on the Logistics North site, a town centre cinema, family entertainment and restaurants for the Market Place, the travel interchange and a refurbished market. Nineteen out of the 30 new employees at the Light Cinema have been taken on through the Team Bolton Partnership – a collaboration of work and skills providers who work together to help get local people into employment. All 30 of the new recruits (apart from the cinema manager) have been taken from the local jobs market.
- The council recognises the importance of attracting and retaining economically active people through the provision of good quality housing. Plans for 1,700 houses at Rivington Chase have been approved and work is on-going to bring forward new housing in the town centre as part of the strategy for supporting the local economy. Ninety Three affordable homes have been completed, a further 141 new builds have started on site and 10 former Right-to-Buy backs delivered. The number of short term and long term empty properties has remained fairly steady throughout 2016 and the overall total of empty properties continues to decrease.

#### **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 structure<sup>9</sup>.

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. 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.

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 has been developed and is available for all staff.

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 2016 and 76% of respondents agreed that the council was committed to equality and diversity. 79% of respondents agreed that the council respected individual differences.

## **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 1,000 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

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<sup>9</sup> Bolton Council's [Equality Policy Statement](#) is available on the Equality and Diversity section of the Council's website

redeployed over 100 members of staff as part of a 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.

The Council has had a key role in influencing the public sector's social employment commitments as well as delivering our own employment scheme.

A key priority for the Council is promoting sustainable growth and ensuring that all residents can access the opportunities that growth brings. The Council is a key member of, and currently Chairs, the Team Bolton Partnership, a work and skills collaboration which has a membership that spans the public and voluntary sector and works to deliver Bolton's [Economic Strategy, 2030](#) and the Combined Authority's Work and Skills Strategy. The Partnership uses existing resources to provide responsive employment and skills support for residents to support inclusive growth. This is with the aim that all our residents are able to (re)connect with learning, develop skills and capitalise on local employment opportunities. There are a number of ways in which the Council through the Partnership drives equality of opportunity for our residents including:

- Team Bolton partners work closely with more than 400 local employers to deliver tailored training and recruitment to ensure some of our most disadvantaged residents can access quality local opportunities spanning employment sectors. Light Cinema, Keoghs and Room Four Dessert are amongst a large number of prominent local employers who have worked with the Council, Job Centre Plus and Bolton College as part of Team Bolton to put on open events, bespoke pre-employment training and work experience to guarantee interviews for residents out of work.
- As part of the planning and development stages of new builds, the Council works closely with businesses such as those at Logistics North to ensure that these developments contribute positively to our economy by creating jobs for all and supporting businesses to grow. Employers and their developers work collaboratively with the Council and the wider Team Bolton Partnership to support residents and businesses to benefit from the opportunities both during construction and subsequent occupation. This has included ring-fencing jobs at Aldi and Whistl distribution centres for unemployed residents and working with business to raise aspirations of our young people through supporting local schools.

Supporting employers to raise the aspirations of young people in schools, including schools in disadvantaged areas, by giving them 'hands on experience' of what it is like to work for a particular business and sector. This also includes Council organised or supported events aimed at raising aspirations and supporting all young people to understand career pathways e.g. from school to Further Education, Higher Education and into employment and a [website](#) which links young people's aspirations to local career opportunities

In addition, to support the Government's overall target of 3 million apprentice starts before 2020, Bolton Council are introducing an Employment Initiatives strategy that maintains the council's social commitment as an exemplar employer. Bolton Council

will increase the number of new apprenticeships offered and introduce apprenticeships for existing members of staff with the aim of working towards a target of 2.3% of the workforce to be in an apprenticeship. The council also aims to increase the quality and variety of apprenticeships to widen access to the professions, therefore higher and degree level apprenticeships are to be introduced. Feeder schemes into apprenticeships are to be supported to ensure apprenticeships readiness for those in need of extra support, and would build on the Council's exemplary practice and social commitment.

During the last five years the council has implemented improvements to pay grades 1 and 2, in order to keep local authority pay rates above the National Minimum Wage, to respond to the national Living Wage campaign and to support Bolton's anti-poverty strategy.

Since April 2013 the Council has delivered a range of initiatives as part of a 5 year £1.5M anti-poverty strategy. These initiatives include additional money skills and debt advice, additional welfare rights advocacy for customers appealing against the loss of disability benefits, the creation of the Shop on the Square to help people access affordable household goods, support for food banks, the expansion of services provided by the Credit Union and funding to help support local initiatives including the BL1 project delivered by Urban Outreach.

### **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 2016 is set out below. Unless otherwise stated most of these details are broadly similar to the previous workforce data published in January 2016. 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.<sup>10</sup>

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, marital status and caring responsibilities) is self-reported collected via a form.

#### *Total employment; length of service; and grades:*

- The council directly employs 3,819 people in 4,080 posts. This figure has reduced since last year due to employees leaving the council to work for Bolton Cares (separate company for adult social care, owned by the Council)
- Almost half the workforce (48%) works part-time, and just over half works full-time 52%
- 61% of employees earn £12 - £24,000 FTE
- 27% of employees earn £24,001 - £36,000 FTE
- 10% of employees earn £36,001 - £48,000 FTE
- 1% of employees earn £48,001 FTE or more
- 17% of employees have worked for the council for five years or less

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<sup>10</sup> 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.

- 83% of employees have worked for the council for 5 years or more, with 50% having served ten years or more.

*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 slightly lower grade than men, 62% earning £24,000 (FTE) or less compared to 58% of men, although 68% of the top 12% earners are female

*Age:*

- The council's workforce is generally older than the workforce population in Bolton as a whole, as set out below.
- 1% of employees are aged 21 or under (compared to 6% in Bolton)
- 7% of employees are aged 22-30 years (compared to 20%)
- 18% of employees are aged 31-40 years (compared to 27%)
- 30% of employees are aged 41-50 years (compared to 23%)
- 36% of employees are aged 51-60 years (compared to 20%)
- 8% of employees are aged 61 and above (compared to 5%)
- In most age groups there is a fairly even split between full time and part time, the exception to this is amongst the youngest and oldest age groups; with 72% of 16-21 year olds being part time and 68% of those 61 years or older being part time.
- 56% of employees aged 41 or over have been with the council for more than 10 years.

*Disability:*

- Data regarding disability is not held for 9% 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 disability<sup>11</sup>) and 97% do not consider themselves to have a disability
- 56% 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 – 51% of staff from this group have been with the council for over ten years
- 2% of the top 12% earners within the council have a disability

*Ethnicity:*

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

Of those employees we hold data for:

- 89% describe themselves as White (White British or belonging to a white minority ethnic group). This compares with 83% in Bolton as a whole
- 11% describe themselves as belonging to a black or minority ethnic (BME) group. This compares with 17% in Bolton as a whole

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<sup>11</sup> This was around 40% in the Bolton Health and Wellbeing Survey 2010.

- 60% of staff from BME groups work part time compared to 47% White.
- 43% of BME employees have been with the council for 10 years or more, compared with 52% of white employees
- 6% of the top 12% earners are from BME groups

*Religion:*

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

Of those employees that have provided data:

- 71% are Christian (compared to 63% in Bolton)
- 10% are from other faiths (compared to 14% in Bolton)
- 18% of employees have no religion (compared to 17% in Bolton)

*Sexuality*

- Data regarding sexuality is not held for 31% 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 13% of the council's employees

Of those employees that have provided data:

- 43% of employees have no caring responsibilities
- 56% of employees have caring responsibilities

Of employees with caring responsibilities:

- 13% care just for adults
- 78% care just for children
- 9% care for both adults and children
- 49% 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 - 54% have been with the council for over ten years.
- 61% of the top 12% 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 parents who require paternity leave) are supported in line with the council's human resources policy framework.

*Marriage and civil partnership:*

- Data regarding marital status is not held for 36% of the council employees. Of employees who have provided data; 62% are married or are in a civil partnership.

## 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 1<sup>st</sup> January and 31 December 2016 737 people left the employment of the council (equivalent to 757 posts). This figure is higher than previous years due to employees leaving the council to work for Bolton Cares (separate company for adult social care, owned by the council). Of these posts:

- 55% resigned
- 11% TUPE'D out
- 24% took voluntary severance, voluntary early retirement or voluntary redundancies.
- 6% retired
- 2% were on fixed term contracts which came to an end
- 2% were dismissed

The changing shape of the workforce is monitored through the savings and efficiency programme.

## 5 Fostering good relations

### 5.1 Leadership and stronger communities

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

### Reinvigorating One Bolton

Bolton prides itself on a long tradition of cohesive communities with a vibrant community, voluntary and faith sector, strong leadership and a commitment to positive long standing partnerships across the town. This has contributed to an important part of our work across the Bolton partnership and was articulated in the cohesion strategy that was developed back in 2010. Bolton's Partnerships are strong. Our Vision Partnership has been operating for many years and is mature in its organisation and commitment to the town. Much of our resilience is attributable to the time and effort taken by all, to nurture these relationships.

### Bolton 2030 (active, connected, prosperous)

One of the six priority themes in the new Bolton Vision 2030 is "Developing stronger, cohesive, more confident communities in which people feel safe, welcome and connected". It's therefore timely that we support this by making sure that our understanding and practice around cohesive communities is current and appropriate.

## **Our commitment**

Developing stronger, cohesive, more confident communities in which people feel safe, welcome and connected is something that's built into all our mainstream activity. It's part of the 'day job' across our partnerships and intrinsically runs through strategies, policies and practices.

We monitor and manage risks and threats to our town through communication, partnership working and careful planning.

Bolton 2030 has a strong focus on place and the people within them. We support local communities including through our work around Neighbourhood Management, Place Based Integration, local area activity & area working. We encourage participation and opportunities for people to come together in an active way. We help local communities to help themselves and particularly focus on those areas where need is greatest.

We support the most disadvantaged people in the town, helping to build resilience and safeguarding those that are vulnerable to risk. We will promote these values through the visible use of One Bolton branding.

### **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.

The Community Empowerment Fund makes resources available for community groups or business to bid for in order to manage demand for council services and/or mitigate the impact of resource reductions is a key response to maintaining cleanliness standards.

### **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.

- Bolton Pride – first ever Bolton specific event held in 2015 under the banner 'love Bolton, hate homophobia'. 2016 saw a bigger event which included a parade and stalls in the town centre, and plans for this year's event in September will build on this even further <http://boltonpride.co.uk/>
- Interfaith work; faith trails / interfaith young ambassadors. <http://www.boltoninterfaithcouncil.org.uk/bic-activities.html>

- Christian cohesion – key events through the year; Easter passion / Christmas etc. <http://www.gmim.org.uk/boltonccc/about-us/>
- Bolton Council of Mosques (BCOM) – open days / breaking fast events during Ramadan etc... <http://www.thebcom.org/index.html>
- Hindu forum – key events through the year  
<http://www.boltonhinduforum.org.uk/>
- Faith leaders forum – chaired by Canon Matt Thompson
- Bolton Wanderers Community Trust – fun days, disability football etc.  
<http://www.bwct.org.uk/>

## 6 Conclusion

This document acts as the annual refresh of the Equality Information for 2017. 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.

The council and partners are currently engaging on the new vision for Bolton 2030 and have recently completed an 'appreciative inquiry' at the Vision Conference in January 2017 which is the start of a deep engagement on the vision for the Borough. This will be 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 the Vision, 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.