



Equality Statement 2014

Published 31 January 2014

Every year we publish an Equality Statement on 31 January that shows how we take into account the varying needs of everyone living, working and visiting our district and, in particular, the specific needs of people in our communities, such as older, disabled and people of certain religions or race.

Our Equality Statement shows how we are meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty, under The Equality Act 2010. It also helps our customers, staff, the Equality and Human Rights Commission, regulators and other interested parties to assess our equality performance and our compliance with equality legislation.

Our current Equality Statement including our equality objectives is available to download at http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/downloads/download/1385/equalities_statements.

We also publish a population profile which provides information about the characteristics of the resident population. This is available to download at http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/downloads/file/5592/population_profile_by_equality_strands_2013

If you have any questions about our Equality Statement 2014, please contact Colin Cooke on 01543 308121 email colin.cooke@lichfielddc.gov.uk or Alison Bowen on 01543 308129 email alison.bowen@lichfielddc.gov.uk

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Introduction

We are committed to supporting and, where possible, improving the general quality of life of the people who live in, work in and visit our district.

Our Equality Statement demonstrates our ongoing commitment to ensuring people are treated with dignity and respect, promoting equality of opportunity and ensuring discrimination is not present in any Council activities including our governance and decision making, service delivery and employment practices .

We work to make our services available and accessible to all, by seeking to remove barriers that may prevent certain individuals and groups from getting the services they need. We recognise and accept that people's needs are different and will work to make our services as flexible and responsive as we can.

This means that our residents, customers, contractors, partner organisations, job seekers, elected Members and employees will all be treated fairly and equally regardless of their characteristics or lifestyle.

Like councils across the country, despite facing significant budgetary pressures, we remain committed to improving the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of all our communities. We will achieve this by working in partnership with others and targeting our resources towards the greatest areas of need. This means our communities must be at the heart of everything we do. We will also continue to equality impact assess any of the service changes we may need to make as a result of budgetary pressures.

About this document

This Equality Statement provides an overview of our equality based objectives and priorities, and gives some examples of current services which have a particular benefit for individuals with protected characteristics. It also demonstrates equality considerations are embedded in our decision making processes and influence both our service delivery and our employment practices.

Our original equality objectives were identified as priority areas through the work undertaken to develop our Plan for the District 2012-2016, including extensive engagement with the community and employees and by accessing additional local and national data.

In preparing this document we have reviewed our equality objectives, and will conduct consultation on them during Spring 2014.

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1. Our equality duty

Introduction

The Equalities Act 2010 introduced a new public sector equality duty which replaced the separate duties relating to race, disability and gender equality

In addition the Act requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to:

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

What is a protected characteristic?

Under the Equality Act 2010, the following are defined as protected characteristics:

- Age
- Race, colour, national or ethnic origin
- Disability
- Religion or belief (including non belief)
- Gender (including transgender)
- Marital status (including civil partnership)
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy and maternity

Our Equality Objectives

The duty requires us to set equality objectives to help focus attention on the priority equality issues facing Lichfield District Council in order to deliver improvements in policy making, service delivery and employment, including resources allocation. We have reviewed our equality objectives and intend to consult on the following proposed objectives:-

1. We will scrutinise and improve access to our services ensuring that we treat people fairly, provide our customers with equal opportunity, and that we gain the business benefit of our services being accessible to the maximum number of people.
2. We will ensure that our workforce profile reflects best practice in recruitment and in consultation with our staff we will develop a culture that is both inclusive and open.

3. We will further promote the use of Equality Impact Assessments such that they become fully embedded in our planning and decision making process.

Government review of the Public Sector Equality Duty:

The Government's aim in introducing the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) was :-

- To build on the previous equality duties, to simplify the previous duties and to extend the duty to other protected characteristics;
- To be outcome-focused; and
- To reduce the bureaucracy associated with the previous duties.

The Government commissioned an independent review to establish if the PSED was operating as intended and the report of the Independent Steering Group was published on 6th September 2013.

While the Steering Group has found broad support for the principles behind the Duty, the review has found the main challenges lie in its implementation, which varies considerably across the public sector.

It was agreed that a full evaluation should be undertaken in 2016 when the duty has been in place five years, but it was recommended that public bodies must:

- adopt a proportionate approach to compliance particularly in relation to
 - data collection and its publishing and
 - requirements on contractors in relation to procurement
- benchmark their processes with Equalities Human Rights Commission and their peers.
- be transparent about their objectives and performance on equality.

We have had regard to these recommendations in developing this Equality Statement.

2. Who lives in our district?

Between 2001 and 2011 the total population of Lichfield District increased by 7.9% from 93,232 to 100,654¹.

Age

The largest population growth has taken place in the numbers of residents over 65 years of age and we expect this to continue in coming years. In 2001, 15.5% of residents (14,437) were aged 65 or over, by 2011 this had increased to 20.2 % (20,254).

¹ All population information is from the 2001 and 2011 census data unless otherwise stated.
Lichfield District Council's Equality Statement 2014

The percentage of residents aged 65 to 74 increased from 8.6% (7,986) in 2001 to 11.9% (11,954) in 2011. In addition to this those aged 75 and over increased from 6.9% (6,451) to 8.3% (8,300).

There has also been a percentage reduction in those below the age of 65. Under 16's reduced from 19.5% (18,143) in 2001 to 17.5% (17,597) in 2011, while those aged 16 to 64 reduced from 65.0% (60,652) to 62.4% (62,803).

Ethnicity

The ethnic make-up of Lichfield District differs significantly from the regional and national compositions, with people of White British origin accounting for a larger proportion of the population than any other ethnic group (94.6% (95,218) of the population in 2011 which is a reduction from 96.57% (90,034) in 2001).

The next largest ethnic group are those classing themselves as White Irish / Other which represents 2.1% ((2,113) of the population an increase from 1.57% (1,463) in 2001.

In 2011 the remaining 3.3% (3,321) are those classing themselves as Mixed 1.1% (1,107), Asian or Asian British 1.7% (1,711) and Black or Black British 0.5% (503).

Disability

Over 18,000 people living in our district (18%) have a long-term health problem or disability.

Since 2009, there has been an 8.4% increase in the number of residents claiming disability living allowance (from 4,360 to currently 4,730 claimants)².

Between 2009 and 2013, the number of claimants aged over 70 rose by 29.4% (from 680 to 880) and the number of 16 to 24 year old claimants rose by 39.1% (from 230 to 320). The majority of claimants are aged between 60 and 69 years old (24.9% of all claimants).

Religion or belief (including non belief)

In 2011, 69% of residents classed themselves as Christians. This has decreased from 80% since 2001. 23% of local people state they have no religion which is an increase from 12% in 2001. 6.4% of people did not state their religion. The number of people of all other religions has increased since 2001; this includes Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, and Sikh.

Gender

The number of men and women in the district is almost equal. This does however vary significantly by age group, with a slightly higher number of women in the middle and older age groups, and more men and boys aged 25 years and under.

² During 2013, Disability Living Allowance (DLA) will be replaced by the Personal Independence Payment (PIP) scheme. Current recipients of DLA will not automatically transfer to PIP, but will be re-assessed.

Marital Status

In 2001, 60% of people living in the district, aged 16 or over were married or re-married. By 2011, this had reduced to 55% and included 32 registered same-sex civil partnerships.

Sexual Orientation

There is no hard data on the number of lesbians, gay men and bisexuals in the UK as no national census has ever asked people to define their sexuality.

Pregnancy and Maternity

Taking the number of live births as indicative of the number of pregnancies, between January 2010 and December 2010 there was a total of 997 (913 in 2004) births to mothers that normally resided within the district (Source: Office for National Statistics www.ons.gov.uk).

Further detail of our Population Profile can be found on the Lichfield District Council website at the following link

http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/downloads/file/5592/population_profile_by_equality_strands_2013

3. How we deliver equality in services:

We provide a range of services

We already provide a range of services that particularly support individuals with protected characteristics and these include:

- Our Community Transport scheme which helps passengers to access basic amenities such as local shops. Local older people's groups and the Staffordshire Association for the Blind are regular users of the scheme. Our community transport buses accommodate wheelchair users. 218 passenger journeys were made by wheelchair users in 2013.
- Our Leisure Activity Passports offer up to 30% savings on leisure activities across the district. People aged over 60, students, people with disabilities and registered carers can apply for a free passport. At 1st April 2013 our leisure centres had 1768 members from targeted groups, by October 2013 this had increased to 1995 (an increase of 12.8%).
- The provision of free additional bins to families where extra waste is generated because of a medical condition, those with children in nappies, and for families of six or more.
- The provision of assisted bin collections for people who struggle to get their bins to the roadside for collection, such as older residents and people with disabilities. In 2013 we assisted 588 homes with these collections.
- Helping people to apply for disabled facilities grants to deliver adaptations within their home. In 2013 we helped over 81 people adapt their homes through disabled facilities grants.

- Commissioning the voluntary sector to provide services through Service Level Agreements. As part of this we are funding Burntwood Live at Home which offers friendship and support to older people, and Cherry Orchard Gardening Services, which trains, supports and employs local people with learning disabilities to become gardeners. Once trained the gardeners then support older residents to maintain their gardens.

How we improved equality in our services in 2013:

In the 2013 Equality Statement we identified service equality priorities.

What **we said we would do** and *what we did*:-

- 1. We will continue to ensure new developments, such as the recently opened Friary Car Park take into account equality issues, such as access, parking and the provision of quality toilet facilities for the disabled.**

We have ensured that the Friary Car Park development takes into account equality issues, such as access, parking and the provision of quality toilet facilities for people with disabilities. As part of our Plan for the District we have recently opened a fully accessible Changing Places facility at the Friary Car Park which includes specialist equipment such as a height adjustable changing bench and a hoist, to help people with disabilities.

- 2. We will implement and monitor the new local council tax support scheme. This will include communicating the changes, developing a hardship fund to help those most affected by the cuts, and work with support groups and the voluntary sector to help them to assist people most affected by the changes.**

The local council tax support scheme was implemented from 1st April 2013. We developed an online guide to provide information on how the changes may affect individuals.

We completed Equality Impact Assessments on:

- *Discretionary Housing Payments Policy – April 2013*
- *Council Tax leaflet available via the Council's website – September 2013*

- 3. We will monitor the progress of Universal Credit and the effect on the current residents who may transfer to the new scheme in October 2013.**

Universal Credit has yet to be implemented. We are working with social landlords and community and voluntary sector partners to coordinate the advice and assistance available in the District through a Task and Finish Group reporting to the Lichfield District Board.

- 4. We will secure funding to make improve Friary Grange Leisure Centre's facilities. This includes improved access, and parking and changing facilities for disabled customers.**

We secured funding from Sport England , Aiming High, S106 and capital funds from Lichfield District Council and Staffordshire County Council. The works were completed in December 2013.

These included building a new reception and pool viewing area, as well as improvements to the changing rooms. Access for the disabled user and visitor was improved from the point of parking vehicles, access to changing facilities and right through their visit to the leisure centre.

5. Our emerging Sport and Physical Activity Strategy will undergo equality impact assessment.

This was delayed in 2013 due to the review of Leisure Services under the Fit for The Future scheme and will take place in 2014.

6. We will increase number of concessionary Leisure Activity Passports we issue by 5%.

In April 2013 membership of our Leisure Centres from our targeted groups stood at 1768, by October 2013 concessionary Leisure Activity Passport membership was at 1995 (and increase of 12.8% and included 1820 over 60's, 88 disabled/carer, 13 unemployed and 74 students)

7. We will work to ensure our approach to community consultation is robust and captures equality data, so we can use it to inform our service delivery. This will include capturing usage, satisfaction and performance data.

We have been working towards carrying out a community consultation exercise in May 2014 in partnership with the Staffordshire Intelligence Hub to inform the Council's savings programme (called Fit For the Future).

During 2013, we began to collect information on the protected characteristics of our customers in relation to housing enquiries, those registering on the housing register and applicants for discretionary housing payments.

This has told us that the age profile of people making housing enquiries and registering on the housing register are much younger when compared to the age profile of the District. Also a higher proportion of people were single when compared to the District profile.

Further details of this information can be found at

http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/downloads/file/5592/population_profile_by_equality_strands_2013

8. We will continue to equality impact assess key policies and procedures, including considering the implications of savings proposals, which may impact on people with protected characteristics.

Owing to further cuts in our government funding we were faced with the need to make savings during 2013. To do this our councillors had to make some difficult decisions about which services we should continue to provide, what we could cut or reduce, and which services we could charge for to raise more income. As part of this process, we carried out equality impact assessments so that the equality implications of savings were fully taken into account before decisions were made. The assessments undertaken as part of this process were:

- Community Development*
- Community regeneration*
- Strategic partnerships*

- *Community Transport*
- *Mobile leisure*
- *Play development*
- *Youth clubs / projects*
- *Community projects including the Old Mining College*
- *Public Toilets*
- *Shopmobility*
- *Research and consultation*

Other equality impact assessment we completed included:

- *Housing Assistance Policy – July 2013*
- *Allocations Policy – March 2013*
- *Homelessness Strategy December 2013*

9. We will update and republish the Statement of Community Involvement for 2013/2014 to ensure the needs of the community are included, together with specific equalities issues where they have been identified.

A review of the Statement of Community Involvement is dependent on the adoption of the Local Plan. As the Local plan has not yet been adopted the review has been delayed and it is proposed to be carried out during 2014.

10. We will provide service managers with specific demographic information to inform emerging plans. For example research into housing need that looks into the needs of specific groups, such as age and disability. This can then be used to inform strategies to provide affordable warmth, flexi care, helping older people to live at home longer, as well as help our partner to plan provision for institutional care.

Research for the Housing Strategy and The Local Plan identified there is a higher proportion than the West Midlands average of the older working population (40-65) and people aged between 65 and 79, but a much smaller proportion of younger working age population (20 to 34) Due to the ageing population the number of older people is forecast to increase even further, particularly in the over 80 age group. This demographic shift will present an increasing challenge for the District and is likely to result in a greater need for smaller and more supported accommodation along with support services. The Housing Strategy and the Local Plan which were approved during 2013 both identified this demographic shift as a priority.

An accessibility survey is currently underway for Beacon Park, Minster Pool and Stowe Pool.

Other Services

Section 106 funding helps to make sure new developments enhance local communities, and aims to reduce the impact of developments on local areas. In 2013, section 106 funding administered by Lichfield District Council helped to deliver a range of projects that particularly support people with protected characteristics, These were:

- The conversion of an outbuilding into education and nature study facility for visitors with disabilities, along with schools and other groups, at the Four Seasons Nature Centre based in Handsacre for the Combined Handicapped and Disabled Society (CHADS society)
- Using £3,500 section 106 funding, the Lichfield Scrap Barn, based at Chasewater Country Park, bought specially adapted IT equipment to help visitors with dexterity or limited speech access work-based learning opportunities. The project was also funded by Staffordshire County Council's Community Wellbeing Fund
- Improved disabled access and installation of new disabled toilets and a new baby changing facility has been achieved at Burntwood Memorial Community Association, on Rugeley Road, thanks to £2,000 section 106 funding. The £14,000 project was also funded by the Burntwood Memorial Community Association.

Our service equality priorities for 2014

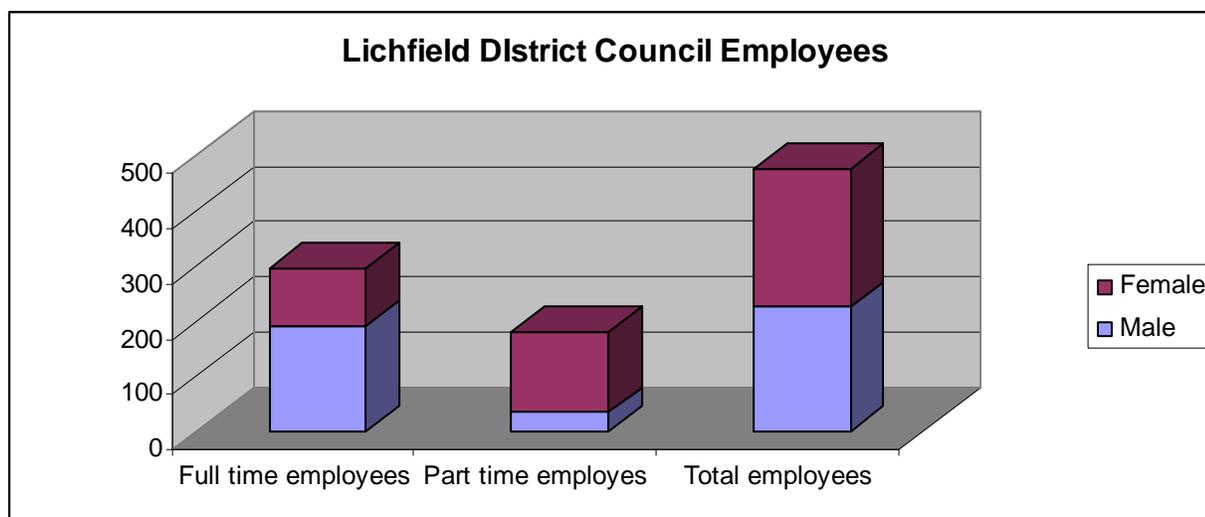
1. We will appoint a Member Champion for Equality issues
2. We will consult with the community on our new Equality Objectives.
3. We will review how we are meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty having regard to the recommendations of the Independent Steering Group.
4. We will introduce an additional section within our Committee report templates in order to outline the equality implications of the matter under consideration.
5. We will continue to undertake equality impact assessments and plan to assess the following:
 - Lichfield District Community Safety Plan (2014 – 17)
 - Discretionary Reduction Policy for Council Tax
 - Licensing Policy
 - Health, Safety and Welfare at Work Policy
6. Where services are reviewed under Fit for the Future and changes are proposed equality impact assessments will be carried out to ensure that the full impact of changes is understood prior to decisions being taken.
7. We will update and republish the Statement of Community Involvement for 2013/2014 to ensure the needs of the community are included, together with specific equalities issues where they have been identified.
8. We will improve our understanding of who accesses our services by developing a standard approach to collecting equality information about our customer
9. Environmental Health will further improve their customer feedback form to incorporate key information on equalities

10. We will collect better information about how our Community Transport scheme benefits people with protected characteristics, especially the elderly and people with disabilities.
11. We will collect information to enable the protected characteristics of victims of anti social behaviour to be monitored
12. A Hate Crime Policy will be put in place, monitored and reported to East Staffordshire Racial Equality Council/Partners Against Crimes of Hate
13. Our Grounds Maintenance and Car Parks Teams will monitor complaints in relation to protected characteristics
14. We will work to ensure that the Local Plan and other associated documents are inclusive of all members of the community and able to support and address the range of needs of all those who live in, work in and visit the District. To ensure that projects which are implemented are accessible and inclusive to those whose needs the project seeks to address.
15. We will maximise take up of Discretionary Housing Payments thus supporting vulnerable people and helping to prevent homelessness

4. How we deliver equality in employment

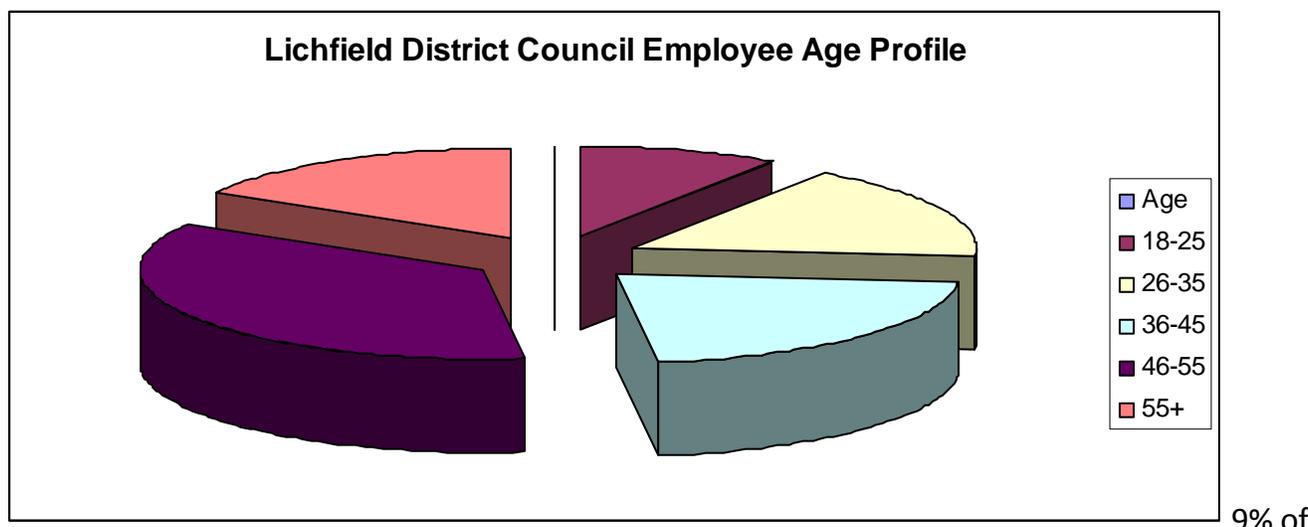
We aim to provide an inclusive, respectful and discrimination free work environment for all our employees. We want all our employees to feel respected and be able to give their best. We maintain up to date policies on Whistleblowing and the Prevention of Bullying & Harassment to ensure that employees can raise concerns in confidence without fear of recrimination.

An overview



We have a total of 475 permanent employees in total 252 (53%) are women, 223 (47%) are men. Of these 295 are full time employees and 180 part time. The graph shows the ratio of male to female staff for all staff

Only 6 (1.25%) are from black and minority backgrounds and 15 (3.17%) have a disability.



Women are well represented in senior positions within the organisation. There are five positions on our Leadership Team, and three of these are held by women, including our chief executive.

We regularly collect information relating to our employees and this helps us monitor changes in our workforce profile. In 2012-13 an analysis of employee turnover revealed that 55% were under the age of 35 and 15% over the age of 55.

How we improved equality in employment in 2013

In the 2013 Equality Statement we identified employment equality priorities.

What **we said we would do** and *what we did*:-

- We will analyse the results of the recent Employee Survey and Equality Survey and share them with staff and our workforce representatives. Based on the results we will take appropriate action which will be monitored and reported on in the Equality Statement 2014.**

The key messages from the Employee Survey 2012 were presented at the Managers briefing in April 2013. The detailed results were considered by Directors and their teams and any localised issues were addressed as a result. Staff were able to make suggestions or comments through team meetings and briefings.

- We will continue to equality impact assess key policies and procedures, including considering the implications of savings proposals, which may impact on staff with protected characteristics.**

An equality impact assessment of the redundancy policy has been completed.

As part of the Councils Fit For The Future programme we have carried out equality impact assessments so that we can understand the impact of the decisions we make as an outcome of the process.

3. We will collect and publish key workforce data.

We publish key workforce data through this Equalities Statement and the Council's Pay Policy Statement

4. We will review the Council Pay Policy Statement.

The Council's Pay Policy statement was reviewed and approved by the Employment Committee and the Council in February 2013 and subsequently published on the Council's website

5. We will improve staff access to equality awareness training. A new online training programme is being piloted at Burntwood Leisure Centre and will be available to all employees through 2013.

The online training programme was made available to all staff and a total of 16 staff have used the programme. 65 staff in our Joint Waste Staff undertook workshop training in working with colleagues and customers which included gaining an understanding of diversity and equality issues.

Our employment equality priorities for 2014

1. We will continue to equality impact assess key policies, procedures and procurement, including considering the implications of savings proposals, which may impact on staff with protected characteristics.
2. We will continue collect and publish key workforce data.
3. We will collect information to enable the protected characteristics of employees involved in Health & Safety related incidents to be monitored
4. We will increase the number of staff that have undergone equality awareness training.
5. We will develop a card setting out individual responsibilities under equality legislation which will be promoted at training and other events.

In addition, for elected Members we will

6. Arrange equalities training for our elected Members

5. How we monitor and identify equality issues

Monitoring our progress, and ensuring we have the right data to both inform and review how well equality issues are embedded into our services, is vital. Here's how we achieve this:

How we monitor our progress

- The actions and priorities identified in the Equality Statement for 2014 will be monitored throughout 2014 and progress reported in the council's next Equality Statement (to be published 31 January 2015).

- Our service plans include a ‘being fair’ section that specifically relates to equality impact assessments and the priorities set out in the Equality Statement.
- Our Community Housing & Environmental Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee will review the Equality Statement 2014 as part of their work programme for this year.
- We will report actions from priorities highlighted in the Equality employee Survey in the 2014 survey.
- We are monitored by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the government’s Equalities Office to ensure equality issues are addressed.
- We will benchmark progress with our partners. (Staffordshire and West Midlands Equality Networks)

Getting the right data

We use national and local data to produce a population profile of the district by equality strands.

This data will be published annually on our website and can be found at http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/downloads/file/5592/population_profile_by_equality_strands_2013

We use population profiling to help identify local priority issues. One very clear message that comes through from local data for example is the high proportion of over 65 year old people (20%) in our community.

However, we have much less data on other protected characteristics such as sexual orientation, and are conscious of the sensitivities around collecting this information.

In addition to statistical data, we will be conducting a consultation exercise with residents’ which will provide further evidence for our Equality Statement.

We also conduct employee surveys and our first workplace Equality Survey took place in autumn 2012 (see Section 4: How we deliver equality in employment).

6. Equality based case studies

The following case studies highlight our commitment to provide fair accessible and caring services, and how we work with our partners to achieve this:

A customer with severe mental health problems and a history of non-engagement with services was made homeless from her tenancy. After lengthy input from the case officer, which included assistance with the removal and storage of her belongings, she was found temporary accommodation with support and eventually permanent accommodation with continued support.

An Asian woman fleeing violence from a family member was accommodated in B&B. Because of her cultural background she lacked the knowledge to access appropriate services. She was found accommodation in a refuge and provided with ongoing support over several months to ensure she received appropriate assistance. She is now looking for employment and seeking her own accommodation.

A report of a noise nuisance and disturbance linked to anti social behaviour was found to be more of a communication issue. Since engaging a local interpreter and encouraging the Bangladeshi family involved to attend English classes, along with other Bangladeshi families, no further complaints have been received.

Any questions?

Our Equality Statement is available to download at

http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/downloads/download/1385/equalities_statement

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