

EQUALITIES PANEL

12 June 2017
4.00 - 6.10 pm

Chair: Antoinette Jackson

Public Members: Graham Lewis, Judith Margolis, Raheela Rehman, Orsola Rath Spivack and Susan Wan

Elected Members: Councillors Abbott, Adey, T. Moore, Ratcliffe and Sheil

Staff Members: Ariadne Henry and Joe Obe

Officers:

Head of Human Resources: Deborah Simpson

Strategy and Partnerships Manager: David Kidston

Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer: Helen Crowther

Organisation Development Manager: Vince Webb

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

17/1/EP Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

The Chair welcomed new members to the panel.

17/2/EP Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

17/3/EP Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting of the 21st November 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed.

17/4/EP Public Questions

There were no public questions.

17/5/EP Community Cohesion, Hate Crime and Prevent

The Committee received a presentation from Tulat Raja, the Community Cohesion & Racial Harassment Officer, from the Safer Communities Team in Community Services regarding the Council's work to promote community cohesion, tackle hate crime and on work around the Prevent agenda.

Tulat explained that the Council is engaged in a number of positive projects to support and celebrate diversity, and promote community cohesion. This includes supporting festivals, such as the Mela, which is part of the Big Weekend and was attended by over 10,000 people last year. The Council is also supporting the Great Get Together, which is on 18th June. The Great Get-Together is a new national event organised by the Jo Cox Foundation set up in her memory, which is encouraging people to get together with neighbours for a celebration of what people have in common.

Tulat explained that the Safer Communities Team provides a Racial Harassment Service for members of the community to report hate crime, which is then investigated by the Racial Harassment Officer. The Police document incidents of reported hate crime, and the Community Safety Team is responsible for supporting and reassuring communities following incidents as well as looking for remedies using civil law. Tulat said that the Cambridge community is very cohesive on the whole, as levels of hate crime in Cambridge remain low with around 20 reported incidents per month, compared to 1,200 general reported crimes.

Tulat explained that Cambridge City Council is also responsible for supporting the Prevent agenda, which means paying "due regard" to preventing violence and terrorism. Prevent is part of the Counter-Terrorism Security Act. The Council also sits on the Channel Panel for Peterborough and Cambridgeshire, which is a panel of professionals looking at referred cases of individuals who are identified as a concern under Prevent. The Channel Panel looks to see if suitable interventions can be made. The Council also is required to run Prevent training courses for Council Officers and last year, around 200 staff were trained.

Tulat said that the local community leaders, including Equalities Panel members, can attend Prevent training and open days at local mosques. Details will be circulated to Equalities Panel members.

The Equalities Panel made the following comments and questions in response to the presentation:

- i. Councillor Adey asked if hate crime incidents had risen since the Brexit vote. Tulat reported that there had been little change in the number of reported incidents in Cambridge City, although there has been an increase nationally.
- ii. Susan Wan commented that academics were fearful that involvement in Prevent of academic institutions was compromising their academic freedom. Tulat explained that legislation places a higher level of requirements on academic institutions, whereas local authorities are required to have “due regard” to preventing extremism.
- iii. Susan Wan asked what response the Council had received from local communities in relation to its work on the Prevent agenda. Tulat explained that initially there had been criticism of the Prevent agenda locally and nationally from Muslim communities, because the Government CONTEST 1 strategy had focussed primarily Islamist extremism. The national approach has changed since then, and the CONTEST 2 strategy focusses on all forms of extremism, including Islamist extremism, far-right extremism, animal rights extremism and Northern Irish extremism, but the Prevent agenda still has negative connotations for some residents. Tulat said that the Council’s approach to Prevent is to support people who are vulnerable to radicalisation, rather than to isolate individuals or communities.
- iv. Orsola Spivack asked for more details on referred cases of individuals who are identified as a concern under Prevent. Tulat confirmed that there have been two referrals in Cambridge City to Prevent so far.
- v. Councillor Adey asked about the proportion of hate crime incidents in Cambridge that included physical violence. Tulat explained that hate crime incidents in Cambridge tended to be non-violent. Detailed figures would be circulated to the Panel.
- vi. Ariadne Henry, Council Officer, shared that Muslim women she works with had noticed a change in attitudes and had reported feeling uncomfortable in public places, such as buses, since the attacks in London and Manchester. Tulat said that people experiencing such incidents should be encouraged to report them.
- vii. Panel members questioned how the Prevent team received referrals of individuals who are identified as a concern. Tulat confirmed that the Council’s Community Safety Team received information from the community the Council works with and the police force.
- viii. Councillor Ratcliffe asked if there have been any changes to the Mela now that Cambridge Live organises the Big Weekend. Officers confirmed that there had been little change.

Antoinette Jackson thanked Tulat for an interesting presentation and confirmed that an email will be circulated to the Panel containing the required statistical information and further opportunities for the panel to be involved in local events and training.

17/6/EP Community Needs Analysis Results

The Panel received a presentation by Helen Crowther, Equality & Anti-Poverty Officer from the Corporate Strategy Service, about the results from various community needs analyses. Community needs assessments were undertaken with BAME people, disabled people, women, and men on low incomes for Cambridge City in 2015. The results have been recently analysed. For Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire, a community needs assessment was undertaken with LGBT+ people in 2014. Results of the LGBT+ community needs assessment have already been published on the [Cambridgeshire Encompass Network website](#). Helen outlined:

- some main themes from all the reports,
- actions the Council has undertaken that relate to issues identified by the respondents in the needs assessment surveys,
- and confirmed that full details for the 2015 needs assessments will be published on the Cambridge City Council website later in the year.

The Panel undertook some group work, and were asked to pick one of two topics, which were identified as important across all 5 community needs assessment surveys. These were hate crime/harassment and involvement in local decision-making.

Two groups decided to look into how individuals/organisations can tackle hate crime and street harassment and discussed some of the following themes:

- i. The Panel raised the issue of how hate crime was under-reported and what could be done to change this. It was suggested that people might be unaware that they should report low-level hate crime and what the definition of hate crime covers. The Panel also discussed how some people might be fearful of reporting incidents of hate crime due to repercussions from perpetrators, and needed reassurance of confidentiality, and that they would be safer once hate crime is reported. Finally, the Panel suggested that there needed to be greater awareness of where hate crime can be reported, including publicising where hate crime reporting centres in the city are.
- ii. The Panel also talked about how to educate the public on hate crime and promote community cohesion to prevent hate crime and discrimination.

They felt that more workshops were needed in schools and colleges to highlight positive elements of diversity, promote equality and to raise awareness on what hate crime is and how to report it. The Panel also argued that local festivals bringing diverse members of the community together were very positive in promoting community cohesion. Some Panel members felt that the Pink Festival was a more prominent and popular event when it took place in Cherry Hinton. One group also suggested that it would be helpful to work with faith groups to help raise awareness of hate crime, potentially through the developing Council of Faiths and the Equalities Partnership.

- iii. Concerns were expressed regarding the concentration of police work in the city centre areas and where fewer officers were present in quieter areas that are also hot-spots for crime where the local community might feel more uneasy.

One group discussed how individuals/ organisations can increase the involvement of different equalities groups in local politics, and talked about the following themes:

- i. Promoting volunteering opportunities within the Council for the public to learn how the Council operates and to provide feedback on how the Council can better support the Cambridge community.
- ii. Further work to engage young people in local decision-making, which the Council has recently been engaged in, such as youth take-over days.
- iii. The Council could look into how committees, such as area committees, could better be used to engage the public in decision-making and explore equality and diversity implications of Council policies.
- iv. Providing training, such as mentoring opportunities, for community activists and community groups to support them to influence Council decision-making.

Helen thanked the Panel for their input and said that their suggestions would be considered for the next Single Equality Scheme strategy (2018-21). She invited panel members to submit any further suggestions they may have by email.

17/7/EP Single Equalities Scheme Annual Update (draft report)

The Panel received a report from Helen Crowther, Equality & Anti-Poverty Officer, regarding the Single Equality Scheme review for 2016/17 (a report on progress for the second year of the Council's three-year equalities strategy). The Panel was invited to submit further feedback on this report by email. Helen

also explained that next year a new equalities strategy is due to be published for 2018 to 2021.

Helen highlighted three projects that are current priorities across all Council services:

- i. The Equalities Pledge;
- ii. Safer Spaces;
- iii. Dementia Action Alliance.

Panel members made the following comments in response to the presentation.

- i. Councillor Moore stated that there were good economic reasons to encourage greater equality.
- ii. Councillor Moore suggested organisations such as Cambridge City Council, needed better ways to flag up service user vulnerabilities and mental health issues before communications were dispatched.
- iii. Councillor Moore suggested that the equalities team should work closely with organisations undertaking similar research to ensure comparability of data. Helen and Ariadne Henry confirmed that the Council is pursuing this.
- iv. The Panel suggested that more work should be directed towards schools and colleges in teaching people about the importance of promoting equality and diversity, and tackling discrimination.

The Panel were invited to submit further comments or suggestions on the current priorities across Council services or on the next Single Equality Scheme strategy (2018-21) via email or by arranging to meet Helen.

17/8/EP Equality in Employment, Workforce Report, April 2016- March

The Panel received a report from Deborah Simpson, Head of Human Resources, regarding the Equality in Employment, Workplace Report 2016/17. She highlighted the trends identified in the report and pointed out that the report was a snapshot of the current position at 31 March 2017.

The workforce report has been produced since 2008 and provides and the opportunity to compare trends with previous years. In 2016 the waste service was transferred to another employer via TUPE. As the workforce of the waste service was predominantly male, this had an impact on the workforce gender statistics. There are now more women than men employed by the Council. We have also recruited more women this year.

Public authorities are now required to provide information on the gender pay gap and this is published in the report for the first time this year.

Positive trends were reported for the numbers of BAME and disabled workers as a percentage of the workforce. Although numbers of BAME staff members have increased, we have not met the target of 9.5% so the Council proposes that the target should remain the same for the next year. The existing target for disabled staff of 6.5% has been reached, so the target will be increased to 7.5%.

When applying for jobs, people have been more reticent this year in supplying age information and this will be reviewed.

The Council has agreed a new Apprenticeship Strategy and will aim to optimise the use of apprenticeship levy contributions whilst continuing to provide a high quality 'Cambridge City Apprenticeship Scheme'.

The Council has a high staff retention rate, 48% of staff have worked for Cambridge City Council for ten years or more.

The Panel made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. Councillor Adey asked about comparable data from other District Councils with similar demographics for their community. Deborah suggested that it was hard to get comparable data and different authorities provided different services. The Local Government Association was mentioned as a potential source of data.
- ii. The Panel raised concerns about the number of internal promotions but accepted that, due to the low numbers, a single year's reporting was inconclusive.
- iii. Susan Wan asked about the gender pay gap and whether future reports would include comparisons with others. This was confirmed.

The Panel requested that numbers to be included as well as percentages when identifying trends.

17/9/EP Equalities Panel Programme for 2017/18

The Panel suggested the following topics for future meetings:

1. Mental Health Discrimination

2. Disability Discrimination

17/10/EP Any Other Business

None reported.

17/11/EP Date of Next Meeting

The next Panel meeting would be on the 20th November 2017.

The meeting ended at 6.10 pm

CHAIR