

3.2.06 Equality and Social Inclusion

Introduction: why is this important?

People who are socially excluded or disadvantaged as a result of their ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, age, gender, religious belief or social background, all too often experience the poorest health and wellbeing and frequently have the worst experience of public services.

We know that isolation from mainstream society is often accompanied by other indicators of deprivation, such as poor housing and low educational achievement. These, along with other socio-economic factors, can lead to serious health inequalities.

What do the facts and figures tell us?

Data on Equality and Social Inclusion is limited. A national indicator for equality and social inclusion looking at Fair treatment by local services was last recorded in 2008 via the People and Places Survey. This survey is currently being reviewed as to if it will be undertaken again and if so, results will be updated within this section at a later date.

What strategies, policies and best practice have been developed locally and nationally?

CBMDC is continuing to carry out Equality Impact Assessments on many of its functions and policies and is committed to embedding Equality Impact Assessments into its decision making process. This will help to support its commitment to achieving “excellence” in regard to the Local Government Development Equality Framework. Action plans are currently being produced based upon these assessments and the key priorities. These will now need to be “refreshed” in the light of the new Equality Act 2010 which identifies the following “protected characteristics” of age, sex, disability, race, religion or belief (including lack of belief), sexual orientation, gender reassignment and pregnancy and maternity. There are a number of policies and frameworks in place, these include:

- Equality and Diversity Strategy for the CBMDC
- The Core Strategy, CBMDC
- Community Cohesion and Inclusion Framework, CBMDC
- New Arrivals Strategy, CBMDC
- Strategic Disability Partnership Action Plan, CBMDC

What challenges have been identified in a local context?

Strategic Delivery Priority 6 of the CBMDC Corporate Plan seeks to make services accessible to those with particular needs and to focus on those with the greatest need. It commits the CBMDC to reducing the effects of economic and social inequality and to continue to work together with partners to achieve this. Strategic Delivery Priority 11 aims to reducing health inequalities by:

- Reducing obesity and improving diet in children and older people
- Reducing the number of sexually transmitted diseases and teenage pregnancy
- Improving people’s mental health and wellbeing
- Reducing infant mortality
- Reducing the damage to health caused by misuse of alcohol, tobacco and drugs
- Promoting active lifestyles

What do our stakeholders tell us?

The following challenges have been identified through the Stronger Communities Partnership:

- Better engagement with communities of interests and equality groups with a clear focus on identifying priorities for action

- Develop a District wide shared understanding of equality issues with partners and communities taking actions together to address them
- Involving partners and communities to address issues of economic and social deprivation in the District

Recommendations: What do we need to do? How do we ensure this remains a priority?

Currently there is a governance review being carried out on the Bradford District Partnership (BDP). BDP is a partnership of Public, Private, Voluntary Sector and Public Interest Groups. The Community Strategy is being reviewed. CBMDC are looking at the New Deal and how services can be shaped and part of this is the need to look at the governance arrangements for all Partnerships.

The New Deal Outcomes are:

- Good schools and a great start for our children
- Safe, clean and active communities
- Better skills, more good jobs and a growing economy
- Better Health, Better Lives
- Poverty (Fairness and Inclusion)

Stronger Communities Partnership fits within the Safe, clean and active communities and includes the Equality Deliveries Group (EDG), Active Communities Delivery Group (ACDG) and the Community Relations Delivery Group (CRDG). The challenge is to ensure merging the Safer & Stronger Communities Partnerships together we make sure that these delivery groups still fit in.

The issue for the objectives is that the engagement of Equality Communities needs to happen and the actions then challenged. They need to continue to be supported and mirror the Neighbourhood-based Equality Communities. There needs to be a system where this is maintained, monitored and championed.