

**Kent County Council**

# **Annual Equality Report 2013**

## Useful information

This document is available in a range of formats and can be explained in other languages.

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**1. Foreword by Paul Carter, Leader of Kent County Council**

*(to follow – approximately a page required)*

## 2. Equality policy and local context

### 2.1 Policy

At Kent County Council we recognise the diverse needs of our community. We value and celebrate diversity, and believe it is essential to provide services which work well for all our customers and staff. We are committed to working with our statutory partners, businesses and the voluntary sector to ensure good outcomes for those who live in, work in and visit Kent. We will achieve our vision through our roles as: community leader; service provider; commissioner of goods and services; and employer. We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity and diversity through: our employment opportunities and standards; service delivery; and working practices. We will ensure that our services do not unfairly discriminate against any of our customers, so that everyone in Kent has the opportunity to reach their full potential. We manage equality and diversity through:

- Community Mapping (aiming to understand our community through socio demographic data, customer data and feedback)
- Leadership, Partnership & Commitment – Working together
- Community Engagement – Listening to our Community
- Customer Service – Delivering Excellence
- Modern and Diverse Workforce (inclusive recruitment and retention, maintaining fair employment practices, and developing a 'diversity aware' workforce)

### 2.2 Context and background

With a resident population of just over 1.46 million, Kent has the largest population of all the English counties. The following information is understood from the 2011 Census.

- 93.7% of all Kent residents are of White ethnic origin – this includes those who are White British, as well as other identities such as Irish, Eastern European origin etc. Kent also has Gypsy, Roma and Traveller populations greater than national average.
- 6.3% of Kent residents are classified as Black or Minority Ethnic (BME). This proportion is lower than the national average for England (14.6%), although has risen from the previous census and is anticipated to rise over time.
- People living in urban areas make up 71% of the Kent population but only occupy 21% of the total land area in Kent.
- 51.1% of the total population of Kent is female and 48.9% are male.
- Significantly in terms of future challenges, Kent has an ageing population with the number of 65+ year olds forecast to increase by 43.4% between now and 2026.
- However, Kent also has a greater proportion of young people aged 5-19 years and people aged 45+ years than the national average.
- There is no single quantifiable measure of the number of disabled people in Kent (or the UK), because identifying as disabled relies on individuals' self-perception; but it is estimated that 20% of UK residents are disabled people.

Further information on social, demographic and economic aspects of Kent can be found on our website, on the Kent Facts and Figures page.

[http://www.kent.gov.uk/your\\_council/kent\\_facts\\_and\\_figures.aspx](http://www.kent.gov.uk/your_council/kent_facts_and_figures.aspx)

### 3. Progressing on our Objectives 2012/13

In 2012 the council identified the objectives set out below. Each council directorate is responsible for the publication of its performance data; information and data about on-going, regular service provision will now be published on [kent.gov.uk](http://kent.gov.uk)

#### 3.1 Objective A - Working with all our partners to define and jointly address areas of inequality.

We are achieving this through the implementation of our key strategies and plans, such as Vision for Kent, Bold Steps and Bold steps for Education, the Kent Children and Young People's Joint Commissioning Board Strategy, and 'Mind the Gap' (Health & Wellbeing Strategy). Examples of achievements include:

- A new partnership protocol on Joint Equality Impact Assessment was developed in 2012 to ensure equality analysis where decisions or services involving more than one agency.
- The launch of a new website to support victims of domestic abuse.
- The delivery of the Kent 2012 Campaign, related to the Olympic and Paralympic Games, and addressing issues around disability, gender, and age in culture and sport. A Kent Olympic and Paralympic Games Legacy Plan has now been launched.

#### 3.2 Objective B - Promoting fair employment practices and creating an organisation that is aware of and committed to equality and diversity and delivers its Public Sector Equality Duty.

Progress on this objective is set out in Appendix A, the Annual Equality Report on Employment.

#### 3.3 Objectives C and D

Objective C - Improving the way KCC listens to and engages with its employees, communities and partners to develop, implement and review policy and to inform the commissioning of services; and

Objective D - Improving the quality, collection, monitoring and use of equality data as part of the evidence base to inform service design delivery and policy decisions

These two objectives are related to an organisation-wide need to have a better understanding of who our communities and customers are and how that may affect their needs and demands for our services, as well as ensuring that what we communicate may reach all residents. Examples of where progress has been made on this include:

**Equality Impact Process** - The equality analysis process was revised in 2012/13 to make it easier to embed equality impact assessment in mainstream working practices. Over 200 equality impact assessments were completed last year as a

result of restructures or changes to service provision; these are published with the decision record. Controls have been put in place to ensure that procurement, consultation and decisions do not take place without equality analysis.

**About You** - We collect information from service users on their protected characteristics in an 'About You' form: this is in order to ensure we have enough evidence to inform decisions. There are four formats of this form including two 'easy read' versions for people with a learning disability.

**Consultation** - The planning of any consultation is underpinned by equality impact assessment, which helps the council to identify groups who may be affected by decisions, and the most effective methods for communicating and engaging with them. Consultation documents may be available in alternative formats, and 'Easy Read' documents are produced as a matter of course if target groups include those with a Learning Disability.

**Customer Service Strategy** - Our customer service strategy, launched in 2012, aims to provide inclusive and responsive customer services through: understanding our customers' needs; connecting with our customers effectively and efficiently; empowering staff to meet service expectations; improving access to services; and working with our partners to improve our customer experience. The strategy aims to improve the way Kent collects and manages customer data.

#### **Web Access**

KCC have facilities on the KCC website intended to assist people with access requirements. We have the languages page that points people to ask an English-speaking friend to ring the Contact Centre if they need something explained to them in their language. [http://www.kent.gov.uk/website\\_information/languages.aspx](http://www.kent.gov.uk/website_information/languages.aspx)

We also promote a link to the Listen to this page function  
[http://www.kent.gov.uk/website\\_information/listen\\_to\\_the\\_page.aspx](http://www.kent.gov.uk/website_information/listen_to_the_page.aspx)

The on-going 'Easy Read' project is reviewing the council's approach to producing easy read materials for people with a learning disability.

### **3.4 Objective E - Providing inclusive and responsive customer services**

This objective is about how we use the approaches outlined above to achieve improved and more equitable outcomes for residents. Examples of how this has been achieved include:

#### **3.4.1 Customer and Communities Directorate**

We are **widening participation in sport** through sport development objectives covering; disability sport, women and girls sport, LGBT sport inclusion and tackling homophobia and race and ethnicity, and have enabled, for example, an LGBT training workshop delivered by Pride Sports, a Black and minority ethnic community clinic providing information on funding and club support.

**Disability access to Country Parks** has been improved with an increase from 2 to 3 in Tramper Easy Access Vehicles hosted at Shorne Woods Country Park, supported by a campaign is currently in progress to promote them to disabled people across Kent. All 6 major Country Parks have blue badge disabled parking provision along with wheelchair accessible toilets wheelchair friendly easy access trails

**Kent Libraries, Registration and Archives** purchased new and diverse stock to support the development of library services: including: 'Pictures to Share' and books about dementia; LGBT collections; Romany Roots Traveller collections; and collections of specially adapted books produced by Access2books. Kent Libraries Registration and Archives continue their commitment in supporting members of the community who are digitally excluded, assisting over 10,000 people with their ICT literacy skills. Abilitynet, accessible software for blind and partially sighted people and people with Dyslexia is available on all our public and staff computers.

### 3.4.2 Education and Learning Services Directorate

We are operating in a more diverse education system with greater freedoms and autonomy for schools, colleges and other education and learning providers. Specifically in terms of equality and diversity the following progress has been achieved in 2012/13:

- There has been a significant reduction in the number of schools below the floor standard
- There has been steady narrowing of the SEN achievement gap at Key Stage 2 by 6% between 2010 and 2012
- Between 2010 and 2012 outcomes for children in care improved at Key Stage 4 by 8.5%
- There has been a reduction in the number of permanent exclusions, down to 192 in 2012 from 252 the previous year
- Persistent absence rates have reduced quite significantly from last year.
- The number of apprenticeships has risen, and Kent is outperforming the South East for the number of people starting apprenticeships
- The number of SEN statements completed within the required timeframes has risen to 85%

A key performance challenge in education is to improve outcomes for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and young people. 1,850 pupils have declared their ethnicity as Gypsy/Roma or Traveller of Irish Heritage. In the 2011-12 academic year in Kent there were a total of 210 Permanent Exclusions (47 Primary and 163 Secondary). 4.3% of the permanent exclusions relate to pupils categorised as Gypsy/Roma or Traveller of Irish Heritage, who make up just 1.65% of the pupil population. Gypsy/Roma or Traveller pupils accounted for 2.8% of permanent exclusions in 2012/13. These figures suggest that in Kent a pupil categorised as Gypsy/Roma or Traveller of Irish Heritage is between 3 and 5 times more likely to receive a permanent exclusion than the general pupil population.

Attainment for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children is also significantly lower than the whole school population.

- KS2 – Level 4 + English and Maths  
**Kent:** 29% of Gypsy/Roma pupils, 12.5% of Travellers of Irish heritage as opposed to 77.5% of all pupils.  
**Nationally:** 23% of Gypsy/Roma pupils, 30.1% of Travellers of Irish heritage as opposed to 74.2% of all pupils.
- KS4 – 5 A\* - C including English and Maths  
**Kent:** 4.2% of Gypsy/Roma pupils, 0% of Travellers of Irish heritage as opposed to 60.6% of all pupils.  
**Nationally:** 10.8% of Gypsy/Roma pupils, 17.5% of Travellers of Irish heritage as opposed to 58.2% of all pupils.

Therefore, we are participating in a two year pilot to raise the attainment and accelerate the academic progress of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and young people.

### 3.4.3 Enterprise and Environment Directorate

Following equality analysis, in 2012 we changed our **bus pass renewal system** to automatically renew concessionary bus passes when they are due to expire. The English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) provides free off-peak travel on local bus services for older people and disabled people. The automatic renewal of bus passes will save pass holders a great deal of time, but importantly, those with visual impairments will no longer need to ask others for help in re-applying.

Working with the Waste Collection Authorities we have improved **Waste Management by** providing a variety of options for householders to dispose of their waste - including specialist collections ('assisted collections' for elderly residents or those with a physical disability) and disposal services (e.g. clinical waste collections). The Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) service places a requirement upon the contractor to deliver a 'meet and greet' service, with assistance available to customers for the lifting and carrying of waste e.g. pregnant women, people with visual or mobility impairments.

### 3.4.4 Families and Social Care Directorate

A key challenge in **Adult Social Care** has been to gain a better understanding of the diversity of our service users. Whilst the service works on a personal basis with many clients and has an understanding of an individual's care needs, we recognise an ongoing need to better understand the broader patterns of experience to help us plan our resources for the future. Achievements in adult social care are published in our Local Account Annual Report 2012-13. The report illustrates how, during that year, we worked hard to: keep vulnerable adults safe; monitor the quality of services; enable people to regain their independence and remain at home; reduce the number of permanent admissions to residential care; support more people through a person-centred process and receive a personal budget; support more people with a learning disability into employment; use surveys and other feedback to look at what we are doing well and what needs further work; and work with health to plan and provide joint services.

**Children's Social Care Services** gather comprehensive equalities data to inform individual service and support care planning as well as providing aggregated data to assist in challenging and improving the total service. Information on the cultural backgrounds of looked after children are used to inform planning for foster carer recruitment and other placement procurement. Information is also used to monitor access to services and the flow of children through care pathways from referral through assessment, to child protection 'section 47' investigations and in assessing and comparing the characteristics of children with an active 'child in need' plan. At the end of March 2012 Kent County Council was looking after 1804 children and young people (1618 citizen children and 186 unaccompanied asylum seeking children). This represents a net rise of 105 (6.1%) of children and young people over the year 2011/12 (April 2011 to March 2012). The average number of children who become 'looked after' each month is 82.6, while the average number of children ceasing to be 'looked after' each month is 74.3 – a net increase of around 8.5 looked after children per month.

For the year 2011/12, 94.8% of children and young people participated at some level in their annual review and only 5.2% (213) of children and young people did not participate in any form at all. The overall average for children and young people attending their review meetings, excluding children under 4 years is 59.2% (2330).

### 3.5 Objective F - Understanding and responding to the impacts on People when KCC is doing its work

This objective is about how the council uses its collective knowledge to ensure that equality information can drive service improvement and resource planning. New governance structures were agreed in 2012/13, including a Corporate Equality Group whose remit is to: support the integration of equality and diversity considerations into core activity; encourage a culture that supports good practice in decision-making; and review directorate and service equality objectives.

## 4 Key challenges for 2013/14 and beyond

A major challenge for 2013 onwards is the limited availability of public finances, combined with an ageing population, and an increasing population of children and young people. The council will need to ensure it meets the needs of the people of Kent, on significantly reduced resources. This necessitates a major shift in how we organise and conduct our business, which will include promoting greater independence and resilience for local people. Owing to the demographics of the county and the nature of the services that are provided by the council, there will be significant changes affecting older people, children and young people and disabled people. Embedding equality analysis, including ensuring that other protected characteristics are not overlooked, is at the heart of these changes is essential.

We are operating in a more diverse range of providers of public services, for example in the education system there are greater freedoms and autonomy for schools, colleges and other education providers. To effect the improvement in outcomes that we need to achieve for residents, and especially for those who are highly dependent on public services, we need to work in close partnership with a wider variety of public, voluntary and private sector providers, and promote greater independence for people, with earlier and more preventative interventions where necessary. For example, we in adult social care, we need to change the way we deliver our services now so we can continue to offer quality care and value for



money for the future. We are committed to improving social care outcomes within the constraints of a challenging financial climate. By 2018, there will be a slight increase in older people, and demand on services will gradually increase. At the same time funding that councils can use to spend on services has been reduced. Current trends show that from 2018 to 2026 the population of older people will increase significantly. Kent County Council is working with many other organisations towards providing joint services and funding to help people manage their own health at home and in the community.

## 5 Strategic equality objectives for 2013/14 onwards

The main challenges that the council faces in 2013 and the following three years are mirrored in the equality challenges for the council. We want to develop a new set of objectives in 2014 that are more focused on customer outcomes; we will group these under a set of six equality aims, which are described below. From what we have learnt since setting our last equality objectives we know some parts of the council still need significant improvements in collecting, recording and managing customer equality data in a way that delivers meaningful improvements for customers. Therefore, we have maintained this as an aim. However, in other parts of the council's business we have identified specific areas where we will seek to improve service outcomes for the people of Kent; we have grouped these under the same headings as three of our transformation programmes. Additionally, whilst all protected characteristics are equally important, the nature of our business and level of budget has very high relevance in terms of Age (both older people and children & young people) and disability; therefore, we have included our desire to improve the accessibility of services (both delivered and commissioned) within an objective to improve the council's business capability.

Our six Equality Aims are:

- Aim 1 Enable the delivery of improved outcomes by better understanding customer needs and values
- Aim 2 Improve the life chances for children and young people, and their families, by transforming the delivery of 0-25 services
- Aim 3 Transform the commissioning and delivery of adult social care and public health)
- Aim 4 Improve access to community-based frontline services by designing them around the needs of service users and residents
- Aim 5 Improve the business capability of the council, including improving the access to our services, through new ways of working.
- Aim 6 Promoting fair employment practices and creating an organisation that is aware of and committed to equality and diversity.

Each council service will be required to consider where it contributes to these aim, and to express its own equality priorities as objectives; we shall then consult on turning these Aims into our new equality objectives. Two examples of how this may be presented are outlined below.

<b>Aim 1 – Enable the delivery of improved outcomes by better understanding customer needs and values</b>			<b>Delivered by: March 2015</b>	<b>Owner: TBA</b>
Delivery Objective (examples only)	Activity	Protected Characteristics	Timescale	Responsibility
X% of decisions are informed by to equality analysis	Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) on changes to policy, procedures, procurement and projects and part of the decision making process. Carry out and ensure the EqIA is maintained and updated. Findings of EqIAs included within decision reports	All	date	All heads of service
X% of council services, including commissioned services, to be analysing customer demographic data to inform service delivery	Accelerate the collection of relevant equality information is collected and used to inform outcome priorities. ‘About You’ Information collected and used to inform service priorities. Consultation and satisfaction reported by relevant protected characteristic	All	date	All heads of service

<b>Aim 2 – Improve the life chances for children and young people, and their families, by transforming the delivery of 0-25 services</b>			<b>Delivered by: DATE</b>	<b>Owner: TBA</b>
Delivery Objectives (examples only) <i>(As defined in Every Day Matters)</i>	Activity	Protected Characteristics	Timescale	Responsibility
Keep all children and young people safe so that: (quantitative measure of safeguarding, speed of decisions/interventions etc)	Implementing Phase 3 of Safeguarding and Children in Care Improvement Plan, Looked-after Children Strategy and the Youth Justice Plan	Age, Gender, Disability, Race, Sexual Orientation, Religion/Belief	Date	Children’s social care services
Narrow the SEN achievement gap further at Key Stage 2 by x% Improve results at KS4 – 5 A* - C including English and Maths, raising the attainment for Gypsy/Roma pupils to X% , and for Travellers of Irish heritage to X%.	Implementing Bold Steps for Education; Improving the use of customer demographic information (see Strategic Objective 1 above) to enable appropriate targeting of programmes and resources.	Age (Children and young people); Gender; Race (in particular Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children)	date	Education and learning services