

**Kent County Council**

**Executive Summary**

**DRAFT- Annual Equality and Diversity Report April 2018 to March 2019**

#### Useful information

This document is available in a range of formats and can be explained in other languages. To ask for an alternative version, please email

[alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk](mailto:alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk)

[Kent County Council Equality and Diversity Team](#),

Phone with Text relay: 18001 03000 414141

Or write to: Kent County Council, Diversity & Equality Team, Room 2.70, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XQ

## **Equality policy and local context**

### **Policy**

In 2016, KCC published the Equality and Human Rights Policy and Objectives 2016-2020. It has been aligned to the Strategic Statement and Commissioning Framework for Kent County Council (KCC), as the two documents set out the organisation's priorities and approach to delivering outcomes for the people of Kent.

We recognise the diverse needs of our community and are committed to promoting equality of opportunity and diversity in employment, commissioning and service delivery.

We value diversity and believe it is essential to provide services which work well for all residents and staff. The services KCC designs and delivers, on its own or with partners, should focus on allowing people, families and communities to be independent. We will treat people with dignity and respect and help people to be safe and socially included. We will support and enable people to make informed choices, so that they will have control over their lives. We are committed to working with all statutory partners, businesses and the voluntary sector to ensure the best possible outcomes for those who live in, work in and visit Kent.

We will challenge discrimination and encourage respect, understanding and dignity for everyone living, working and visiting Kent. This will be achieved through our influence in the community, strategic planning, and commissioning and policy development in employment and through service delivery.

As a public sector organisation, we follow the Public-Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010, to protect individuals from discrimination against people on the basis of their protected characteristics. The characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnerships
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion and Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

### **Kent County**

With a resident population of just over 1.54 million, Kent (excluding Medway) has the largest population of all the English counties. The following information is taken from the 2011 Census and the mid-year population survey.

- 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 the national average.
- The 2011 Census recorded that 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%).
- People living in urban areas make up 74% of the Kent population but only occupy 23% of the total land area in Kent.
- The Mid-year population survey notes that 51% of the total population of Kent identify as female and 49% as male.
- Significantly in terms of future challenges, Kent has an ageing population with the number of 65+ year olds forecast to increase by 57.5% between 2015-2035.
- Kent has a greater proportion of young people aged 5-19 years and people aged 45+ years than the England average.
- There is no single quantifiable measure of the number of disabled people in Kent (or the UK), because identifying as disabled relies on an individual's self-perception; but it is estimated that 17.6% of Kent (excluding Medway) residents are disabled people.
- 1434 Civil partnerships were formed between 2006-2015 in Kent. This dataset only relates to civil partnerships that are formed within Kent. It does not necessarily provide a true reflection of the number of Lesbian Gay and Bi - sexual people living in Kent.

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/about-the-council/information-and-data/Facts-and-figures-about-Kent>

## Workforce

Kent County Council (KCC) believes and recognises that the diversity of its workforce is one of its greatest strengths. It is committed to promoting equality and inclusivity and combating unfair treatment by providing a safe and accessible working environment with fair access to learning and development opportunities. The Council encourages and supports all staff in fulfilling their potential.

The section below contains details on how the Authority's workforce is made up, focusing on headline statistics, as at 31 January 2019.

- Current total number of FTE (non-schools) **6970.58**
- % of staff who are female **79.5%** (51%)\*
- % of staff who are Black & Minority Ethnic **7.9%** (6.3%)\*
- % of staff who have declared a disability **4.2%** (17.6%)\*
- % of staff who are Lesbian Gay or Bisexual **3.1%** (2.3%)+
- % of KCC's leadership group who are women **61.70%**
- % of staff aged under 25 or below **7%**

- Average age of staff **45**
- Current total FTE on grades KR6 or below **2502.3** (non-schools staff earning salaries up to £21,789)
- % of staff aged over 50 **41.2%**
- % of staff aged over 65 **3.4%**
- Sickness days lost per FTE **6.26**

\*The figures in brackets are the percentage of Kent's population from those groups, as identified in the 2011 census.

+Figure in bracket is the percentage of people in the South East identifying themselves as LGB, as identified in the National Office of Statistics data set published on 21 January 2019.

The total number of FTEs (non-schools), since the last report, has fallen overall by 7.8%, and the number of staff employed at KR6 or below has decreased by 6.7%. This change has increased the percentage of staff; who are female (by 1.6%), who are Black & Minority Ethnic (by 0.5%), those who have declared a disability (by 0.2%) and the leadership group who are women (by 0.6%).

It is acknowledged that the gap between the percentage of individuals declaring a disability and the census figure does appear wide. This gap is influenced by the fact that the census data covers the total of Kent's population, some of whom are not economically active or in employment and includes a larger proportion of older people than the Council employs who are more susceptible to developing a health condition that would be classified as a disability.

The average age of staff has increased slightly (by 0.4%) and this has been reflected in the percentage increase of staff over the age of 50 (up by 1.2%) and 65 (by 0.5%). The percentage of staff under 25 years of age has decreased by 0.7%.

The percentage of staff declaring they are Lesbian Gay or Bisexual (LGB) has risen by 0.5%. The overall percentage of 3.1% compares favourably to the National Office of Statistics data which shows that currently within the South East 2.3% of the population identify themselves as LGB.

## **Equality Objectives 2016-2020**

In 2016, Kent County Council published a new Equality and Human Rights Policy and Objectives. The objectives have been set against six domains recognised by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) as having a significant impact on the quality of life of individuals. The domains are:

- Education
- Work
- Living standards
- Health
- Justice and Personal Security
- Participation

Each Directorate was asked to provide equality information and to demonstrate how they complied with equality legislation between 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019, and the performance measures in place to achieve the KCC Equality Objectives.

Performance against the equality objectives in 2018-19 has been reported to Directorate Management Teams (DMT) and Cabinet Committees between June and July 2018. Evidence submitted suggests that overall the council has made progress on the processes and procedures that are needed to mainstream equality into core business. However, there are areas where performance has not been as expected. Examples of activity undertaken in 2018-19 are listed below under the domains.

## Education

Education and learning have the potential to improve the wellbeing and life chances of all children and young people, especially the most vulnerable groups in our communities.

The CYPE Vision and Priorities for Improvement - 2017-2020 is the key strategic plan for Children, Young People and Education in Kent and sets out shared goals and includes a range of ambitious priority improvements up to 2020. Progress made against each equality priority is detailed below each objective.

### Narrowing the achievement gaps

In 2018 75.3 74.2% of children in Kent achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which is a slight improvement from the 2017 figure of 74.2%. This outcome is above the national figure of 72.4% and places Kent second amongst its statistical neighbours. Achievement gaps in 2018 were as follows:

*Gender* - girls continued to out-perform boys with 80.6% of girls compared to 68.1% of boys achieving a GLD. This represents an improved position from a gender gap of 14.2% in 2016 to 12.5% in 2017; The *SEN* gap widened to from 52.8% in 2016 to 59.0% in 2017, which means fewer children with SEN (20%) achieved a GLD in 2017, compared to 27.2% in 2016.

In 2016/17 EAL learners achieved significantly above their national peers at all key stages. Although overall Minority Ethnic pupils and EAL learners generally do better than their non-minority ethnic and non-EAL peers in KS2 and KS4, the lowest achieving groups remain consistent across all key stages.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils continue to have the lowest achievement. White Eastern European (WEE) pupils, Kent's largest minority ethnic group, continue to be behind non-EAL learners, alongside Black Caribbean children and young people.

Whilst Kent's position is strong in comparison to the national, there is clearly still much work to be done to ensure that more children universally achieve more highly,

whilst further narrowing gaps in achievement for children who may be vulnerable to not achieving to their full potential.

At Key Stage 1, outcomes improved across all indicators and was above the national average across all subjects. The attainment of FSM pupils was in line with national FSM attainment in reading and above in writing and mathematics.

At Key Stage 2 (KS2), outcomes were above the national average for the second successive year, at 65% for reading, writing and mathematics combined. This placed Kent first amongst our 11 statistical neighbours in 2017.

### **Driving down permanent exclusions to zero for primary age children with regard to Sex and Race**

Strong local collaborative working between the schools has helped keep Kent's permanent exclusion rate below the national average. There are many examples of good practice showcasing Kent schools' inclusive approach in actively finding good alternatives to the permanent exclusion of vulnerable learners.

Work has been continuing between the PRU, Inclusion & Attendance service (PIAS) and schools to reduce the number of permanent exclusions in primary schools. Whilst numbers are low (20 in a 12-month rolling period) they are proving difficult to reduce further (at the same point last year there had been 16 in a 12-month rolling period). The current rate of permanent exclusions in Kent primary schools is in line with the national average of 0.02%.

Boys are over-represented in permanent exclusions from schools, accounting for nearly 80% of permanent exclusions. Most exclusions are White British pupils, though a small but significantly disproportionate number are from Gypsy/Roma families.

### **Where appropriate, fewer young people become young offenders with regard to Race Disability and Sex**

Boys are over-represented with approximately 89.4% of the Youth Offending Caseloads being male.

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) young people are also over-represented within the criminal justice system. Kent reflects the national picture and within the County approximately 15% of young people within the justice system are BAME whilst, according to the 2011 national census, 6.3% of the Kent population are from these ethnic groups.

An integration pilot in South Kent has been focusing on joining up all adolescent teams and approaches, with the aim of delivering earlier intervention for vulnerable young people. Initial outcomes are encouraging, and it is hoped that longer-term this will keep more young people known to Specialist Children's Services (SCS) out of the criminal justice system.

A joint protocol has been introduced between Youth Justice and SCS to improve the integrated working and joint support for young people known to both services. It is anticipated that this approach will bring positive results to young people's outcomes.

### **Increase learning and employment opportunities for those aged 16-25**

Kent Supported Employment has helped 316 vulnerable learners with physical disabilities, autism and learning difficulties to move into a variety of sustainable employment outcomes over the last year including 58% into paid sustainable employment. There were also a variety of other offers including work placements and voluntary work to enable students to progress into permanent employment. Excellent results have also been achieved by working with 18 vulnerable learners from schools and training providers to move into Supported Internships and 23 into Assisted Apprenticeships. Kent Supported Employment has also been working closely with the NHS to help them employ more staff with learning difficulties as part of their five-year pledge.

### **Ensure more young people are able to access progression pathways post 16 including an offer or an apprenticeship**

Although Kent has recently seen good inspection results for post 16 provision, appropriate technical pathways are not always in place to support the progression of all learners from age 14 to 19 into skilled employment. There continues to be a high drop-out rate for learners aged 17 in Year 12 in Kent schools and colleges which remains a concern. The NEET and 'not known' numbers overall are reducing, which is positive, but there are still too many young people in vulnerable groups who become NEET, particularly SEND learners and Children in Care. In the past year the NEET figures reduced to 2.6% in January 2018, which is an improvement of 0.4% on the previous year.

### **Increasing access to early years services for 2-year-old offer of free provision regardless of disability race or sex**

Whilst there are district variations, take up across the county has continued to steadily increase, with the maximum take up being 74%. Approximately 53% of the places taken were by boys, 2.3% by children with disabilities and 16% by BAME children. The Early Years and Childcare Service tailors marketing activity to ensure maximum take-up of Free Entitlements by two, three and four-year olds. Alongside this, Early Help (particularly Children's Centres) are providing local outreach to ensure that eligible families are aware of this provision and encouraged to take up the entitlement wherever possible.

### **Recruit, retain and develop a workforce that reflects the communities we serve and ensure our people feel valued and respected.**

An inclusive approach to employment practices helps ensure that service users, staff and employees of partner agencies are treated with the level of dignity and respect that is expected.

The Kent Graduate programme Offers opportunities across three graduate streams. The Education People Skills and Employability Service manages KCC's work experience programme and continues to offer a wide range of work placement opportunities for people across Kent. People with a disability are supported by The Education People's Specialist Employment service should additional assistance be required.

The apprenticeship levy was introduced in April 2017 and since that time KCC has been able to spend these funds on Apprenticeship training. One of the most significant changes is that there is now no age limit for Apprentices which means that anyone can be an apprentice and staff of any age can access funding for Apprenticeship training.

In the year to date 27% of Apprenticeship training starts are aged 16 -18, 23% aged 19 -24 and 50% are over 25 years of age. Additionally, of the 143 new Apprenticeship training starts in the year to January 2019; 61 of these are new apprentices to KCC.

Inclusivity and equality are integral to the development, delivery and monitoring of corporate training programmes to ensure learning resources are suitable for all. From 1 April 2018, over 3,200 Equality and Diversity e-learning courses have been completed. This includes Equality and Diversity in Recruitment and Selection, Introduction to Equality and Diversity, Care Certificate – Standard 4: Equality and Diversity and Introduction to Equality Impact Assessment.

### **We will continue to be an inclusive employer**

KCC has four staff groups, all of which play a leading role in providing support and development opportunities for their members as well as advising on policy and practice to support our commitment to promoting equality, valuing diversity and combating unfair treatment. The groups include: Level Playing Field (disabled staff and carers), Black and Minority Ethnic Group, Rainbow (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender staff) and Aspire (staff 30 and under).

The Unite staff group renamed itself Black and Minority Ethnic Group. The Rainbow Staff Group celebrated its 15th anniversary with an event addressed by the Chairman of the County Council.

Kent County Council achieved Level 2 of the Government's Disability Confident standard, which recognises businesses that are actively inclusive in their recruitment and retention practices.



The Council regularly collects and analyses data on the adjustments made to ways of work and equipment employees use in order to understand how many people are being supported, identify trends and the type of support required and whether we are able to support people in the most cost-effective manner. In 2018 the process was adapted to improve data collection and to look at the analysis so that it better informs decision making.

The Expect Respect campaign was developed, in association with the Staff Groups, and is displayed throughout the Council's buildings. It is a vital part of our approach to reminding people of their responsibilities towards employees and service users as well as highlighting what treatment they can expect in the workplace. Kent County Council continues to use it to support its inclusivity agenda. In 2018 the campaign was refreshed and relaunched, including a significant presence in the foyer of County Hall.

The County Council continually works on improving its systems to support the diversity and inclusion agenda. In 2018 its recruitment and HR systems were changed, following feedback, to ask about people's sex rather than gender. We also added the option to choose Mx as a pronoun/title.

In order to ensure that people were reminded about the requirement to undertake Equality and Diversity in Recruitment training and to have trained people on interview panels a prompt was added to the recruitment system.

Kent County Council undertook an audit, run by the Employers' Network for Equality & Inclusion, on how inclusive its employment and procurement practices are. The results showed how KCC performed across a range of categories. The Authority achieved the scheme's Silver Award.

Due to the changes introduced for this year, more people will have received a pay award from April. These changes benefit people who are on maternity leave, long term absence and those newly appointed. There has been a concerted effort to continue to promote the equality agenda for part-time workers to ensure they are treated consistently within the Total Contribution Pay approach. The Corporate Management Team have been monitored the impact to ensure that progress is being made.

KCC has now posted the second Gender Pay Gap report which covers the period up to March 2018. The gender pay gap for KCC is significantly below the national average. This is positive for KCC, the figures being 11.1% and 17.9% respectively. The KCC figure is explained by the higher proportion of men in the upper middle and upper pay quartiles. Both the KCC mean and median figures have reduced since last year which were 12.6% and 18.2% respectively, again this is positive as both figures have improved.

KCC supported 30 employees to become Public Health Champions through the programme in 2018. The Champions were awarded with RSPH qualifications in Understanding Health Improvement and Understanding Mental Wellbeing which equipped staff with the tools needed to have a positive role in improving health and wellbeing on an individual level, with families, in teams and in organisations.

The programme for 2018/19 was delivered through a new provider. The format of the current programme allows participation from a much more diverse audience in terms of staff roles, seniority and location. Public Health Champions have been involved in a range of initiatives such as:

- Measures to encourage activity, inclusion, improve mental wellbeing and aim to reduce stress for example campaigns to encourage staff to take a break, Lunch Hubs, Walk on Wednesday, peer to peer support
- Awareness raising of the dangers of social media and encouragement of a digital detox

Diversity and inclusion is embedded throughout the 'Kent Manager' programme to ensure managers understand and reflect on their responsibility for ensuring that the Council is an inclusive employer. A revised programme was launched in April 2018 and centred around three modules: Personal and Organisational Development, Resource Operational Management and Customer and Business Focus.

The Future Manager Programme is a talent management programme in KCC aimed at our high performing staff up to grade KR8 who have the potential to progress into a managerial role in 2 to 3 years. The programme has been updated to align to our leadership capabilities with a 360-assessment included at the start and end of the programme. The equality and inclusivity agenda continues to be integrated in the programme from the outset, for example. "High potential high performing employees will not necessarily be full time members of staff who work closely with managers and have the ability to evidence and be involved in higher profile projects".

Staff are able to enter and/or change their equality data held on KCC's staffing database through an on-line self-service tool. The information is confidential and enables KCC to maintain an accurate and up to date profile of the workforce. During 2018/19 948 staff visited the equalities screen to either view or update their information.

To ensure that equality and inclusivity is built into both managers and KCC staff activity the internal communications system is used to raise awareness of new initiatives or support available, for example Transgender Awareness e-learning and information about reasonable adjustments. Specific initiatives were also supported for example the Black History Month display organised by the BMEF staff group and Time to Talk (a national campaign aimed to reduce the stigma surrounding mental illness).

The Health and Safety team support the Strategic Wellbeing and Resilience Group to help promote the healthy workplaces agenda. This includes working closely with colleagues to ensure a collaborative approach to health and wellbeing is achieved. A Healthy Workplaces seminar was held in November 2018, which promoted wellbeing and resilience within the context of business change and included interactive sessions.

The Health and Safety team has maintained support for managers and teams through KCCs stress management policies and tools on both a team and individual basis. The team also promotes self-sufficiency in workstation set up through the use of Display Screen Equipment (DSE) self-assessment forms, DSE champion workshops and e-learning training. Where managers and/or individuals require more assistance due to complex medical or other needs, the Health and Safety team will carry out a full assessment.

### **Listen and engage with employees.**

The Engagement and Consultation Team reviewed the channels used and the approach taken to support staff communications.

The purpose of this review activity was to make sure our Directorate focused communications were reaching the right people in a way that worked for them. For teams working in remote “field based” locations we have also checked whether they have the opportunity to access the briefing materials and are pleased to report they do and are well supported by management teams to find out more.

This year we have used new animation technology to create easy to read insights for our core processes and continue to meet the diverse and sometimes complex demands in the organisation. We have worked to recommission the delivery of KNet (KCC’s internal intranet). The accessibility team have reviewed the new system at proof of concept stage and once migration is complete, they will do so again.

This year we have responded to requests from staff groups to share their goals and priorities in our whole organisation communications. This means advertising specific actions in relation to commemorative/celebration days where impact has been identified by the staff group.

Direct engagement with Staff groups has enabled our service to assess the equality impacts of our communication styles and priorities as well as our tools. Staff Groups formed one of the focus groups inputting to the development specification of the new KNet and will also engage in user testing.

We worked closely with staff groups in the development, testing and reporting of the staff survey. Our Equality Impact Assessment gave us the opportunity to explore the best way to reach the widest range of staff.

This year our new approach to the survey has provided a robust and granular level of detail in regard to those staff who identify with a protected characteristic.

We have reported the complete analysis to Corporate Equalities Group and actions are now embedded across Directorate and whole organisation action plans. This will allow us to review the benchmark from year one.

### **Protected characteristics will be considered within all highways and transport schemes identified within Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4), as well as the schemes' potential to advance equality of opportunity**

The A20 Harrietsham Highway Improvement Scheme to reduce the speed and manage potential traffic growth whilst retaining the village feel of Harrietsham and aspiring to make public transport more appealing. During the scheme design, a consultation took place in the form of a questionnaire which specifically asked respondents of their requirements with regards to protected characteristics. In response, crossing points were provided in certain areas where demand was identified, and a toucan (two-can - designed for pedestrians and cyclists to use at the same time) crossing provided rather than a puffin crossing to assist with cyclists' needs being accommodated at the same time as a wheelchair user for example.

HTW's The Big Conversation - Consultation for future delivery model of rural bus services

This project identified a number of potential negative impacts in the equality screenings of the proposed models. The characteristics concerned were Age, Disability, Carers and Maternity and issues focused on size of vehicle, financial implications, and booking requirements. Widespread consultation with networks comprising these groups was identified as the key action in the EqIA action plan, to ensure negative impacts were avoided or appropriately mitigated.

### **The protected characteristics of all members of a community will be considered when investing in roads, facilities and utilities that are identified through the Growth and Infrastructure Framework (GIF), and delivered to meet the needs of Kent's population changes**

Each year HTW reviews the Council's Winter Service Policy and the operational plan that supports it to reflect changes in national guidance and lessons learnt from the previous winter. Following 2017/18's "Beast from the East", further mitigations for elderly and disabled customers have been put into place with local district plans and supply of a salt/sand mix to Parish Councils who can prioritise snow clearance for care homes, and around GP practices and hospitals.

In 2018/19, the South East Business Boost (SEBB) programme has identified other partners/bodies to work with to assist those who were previously underrepresented in applying for grants, identifying or accessing the grants available through the SEBB programme, such as Kent Foundation and the Women in Business Network. Data continues to be collected on some protected characteristics (Age, Sex, Ethnicity and Disability) but key now is the analysis of the data to inform the reach of the SEBB.

As funded under an EU Scheme, Locate in Kent also have a requirement to collect data on the same protected characteristics as the SEBB programme. They have

reported a good return on Sex protected characteristic data but there were some reluctances by companies to provide the other requested data, usually owing to a misperception of why the data is sought and/or a reluctance of individuals to self-identify their own protected characteristics

The Digi-Gif project aims to create and provide a digital platform for the Kent & Medway Growth & Infrastructure Framework. An initial screening has identified impacts on Age (older users are less likely to have the confidence and skills to access the GIF online), Disability (those with disabilities may have difficulty in using the website or its interactive features as well as reading the narrative and analysis provided) and Race (English will not be the first language of all Kent residents). Mitigating actions included in the project plan include: All functions and interactive capabilities of the Digi-GIF will be designed to be accessible and easy to use by all; Online help and guidance will be available; A digital accessibility audit will be undertaken during the development of the final platform and will also be included in tender documentation; Clear links and presentation of information will be made in plain English; Alternative formats and languages of the Digi-GIF platform will be made available.

The Coroners' Body Removal and Transfer service is provided for the removal of deceased from place of death to designated hospital mortuaries in Kent and Medway, and for the transfer of deceased between designated mortuaries in Kent and Medway, and other specialist mortuaries outside of Kent. Considerations for unaccompanied and vulnerable older or younger people and disabled people present at a sudden death is given by other services on the scene such as the Police via KCC Social services.

Under the protected characteristic of race, translations can be provided for those who do not speak English, and equally the leaflet given on behalf of the Coroner 'Where a death is referred to the Coroner' which explains why the deceased is being removed, can be provided in alternative languages. Should any special religious or faith requirements arise with regards to the removal and transportation of the deceased to the designated mortuary, the contracted Funeral Director will call the Coroners' Office for guidance. The Coroner has discretion to agree to any such requests provided that they do not compromise the preservation of the body of the deceased as evidence for the Coroners' enquiries.

**Irrespective of Age, Disability, Race or Religion and Belief, Kent residents should be able to access our county's high-quality landscapes and environment**

The Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan project produced a new Countryside Access/Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Kent, for the period 2017 – 2027. The plan identifies action points to ensure a better experience for those with mobility limitations across Age, Disability, Maternity and Carers characteristics which include, maintenance of network, vegetation clearance, work with landowners to remove stiles and ensuring least restrictive access.

## **The Libraries, Registration and Archives (LRA) Service in Kent will continue to understand its local communities' needs, and tailor its services accordingly**

In 2018/19, a need was identified to improve the libraries service's webpages. Ensuring the needs of customers with protected characteristics were met was an integral part of the goals for the project. For example, images to be used on the website were to show a broad range of ages, backgrounds, sex, race, and so on. A section on the website was also set up for customers who might not be able to come to the library due to disability, called Library Direct. Promotions are also advertised on the website, including LGBTQI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Intersex) resources and events.

Libraries data was used to assess school engagement and attendance by adults with children. In addition to this, focus groups were held as well as an online survey for schools. Following the feedback received, a revised offer was put forward, including removing the charge for library school card, aligning fees (fines and reservations) with the public offer and maintaining free introductory class visits to the library for children.

As part of relocation of Bockhanger library to the local Children's Centre, customer data was collected from the library management system, Spydus to inform on borrowing habits. There were a number of positive outcomes from equality analysis, including height adjustable chairs, promotion of eBooks (benefiting housebound users who may be more likely to have Age, Disability, Maternity or Carer characteristics) and other online resources. The stock management system, Collection HQ is used to rotate stock frequently to ensure that the offering remains fresh and accessible to all.

The Libraries, Registration and Archives service piloted technology assisted opening hours at three libraries to enable customers to access library services outside of normal opening hours with no staff presence. Customer data was collected and as a result, the emergency exit at Higham Library was improved for wheelchair users.

As part of making better use of KCC buildings a space was identified at Faversham Library that could be used by the Faversham Good Day Programme (GDP). GDP has been running since 2008 and develops community-based day opportunities for people with learning disabilities. As part of this project, a new 'Changing Places' toilet will be built so that anyone who needs assistance with their personal care can still access their community. The scheme involves a library refurbishment and reconfiguration as well. As part of the refurbishment, customers were consulted on what items of stock they would like to see added, or particular areas developed, which included books and resources on disabilities. Existing groups such as Talk Time (comprising generally older customers), were relocated temporarily during the refurbishment process.

### The rate of male suicide declines.

Every suicide is a tragedy for the family, friends and community of the individual who died. Suicide is the biggest killer of men under 45 and research has shown that middle aged men are the population group with the highest risk of dying in this way. Approximately 70% of individuals who die by suicide are male, however as the latest statistics in Table 1 shows, there has been a recent fall in the numbers of men taking their life in Kent. (A death can only be confirmed as a suicide by a coroner in a process which can take a number of months, hence why these are the latest numbers available).

**Table 1 - Numbers of deaths from suicide and events of undetermined intent, 2010-2017 registrations, aged 15+ Kent residents, by gender (Source: Primary Care Mortality database, KPHO (JB))**

Area resident	Gender	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Kent	Male	73	85	97	119	130	116	104	85
	Female	27	34	26	31	35	36	36	38
	Total	100	119	123	150	165	152	140	123

Given that every person who dies in this manner has their own reasons and life story it is very difficult to directly attribute individual interventions as the direct cause of this reduction, however KCC continues to work with partners on a number of programmes have contributed to a culture and society where more men are seeking and receiving the support that they need. These include:

- The Release the Pressure social marketing campaign which has resulted in thousands of additional helpline calls and website visits in 2018/19
- Commissioning free suicide prevention training – over 1500 professionals, volunteers and individuals attended this training in 18/19
- Targeting high risk industries (such as construction and transport) with additional support
- Undertaking in-depth research with men who have attempted suicide.

Additional funding from NHS England has been secured for 2019/20 to allow this work to continue. The definition of what constitutes a suicide changed mid-way through 2018. Coroners were told to go from “beyond reasonable doubt” to “on the balance of probabilities” which has a lower evidential threshold. This may serve to increase the national overall numbers.

### Ensure equity of access to Sexual Health services to improve health outcomes.

KCC’s vision for services is to ensure that local residents have timely access to high quality services to improve and manage their sexual health through the delivery of a fully integrated, cost effective sexual health service model, accessed by a digital single point of access.

Young people who are Not in Employment Education or Training, vulnerable young people and under 16's have been identified as being at risk of worse sexual health outcomes. KCC has commissioned Metro to carry out targeted work with these groups.

Targeted outreach has been undertaken in Dartford and Maidstone and has led to an 85% increase in site registrations in Maidstone and a 109% increase in Dartford. Following analysis of data targeted intervention has also been planned for Canterbury Thanet and Swale.

Sexual Health services have been designed to be responsive to the intersectional sexual health needs of people who access them. **The needs assessment** highlighted a gap in servicing for transgender people. An interagency group established a signposting service commissioned by the CCGs and a specific programme of work.

Nationally there has been a decline in cervical screenings taken up by women. In Kent this is reflected in some BAME communities. This has been shared widely and Public Health and partners such as NHSE will consider the barriers to uptake in order to address the health inequalities that may arise as a result of poor screening uptake. There will also be discussions to consider the access to and uptake cervical screening amongst those with a learning disability.

The percentage of late diagnosis of HIV in Kent has further increased to 60.7% compared to 40.2% in England as a whole. Two districts, Dartford and Gravesham have an increasing prevalence of HIV, with a rate over 2 per 1,000 15-59-year olds. HIV testing is promoted through the national HIV testing programme and the option for an HIV test only is provided online.

Despite the advances in medical care for people living with HIV, there is still stigma attached to the condition which affects the uptake of testing. Overall uptake in Kent for the HIV testing has gone up, however it is varied across districts, with higher levels of testing in some districts than others

### **NHS Health Checks**

To address findings of the equity audit, targeted work has been carried out including community outreach work on the East Kent Coast, targeting males in licensed establishments (in December and January 2019). Digital communications / advertising was put in place to raise awareness and encourage males to attend the series of health checks.

The team are also doing workplace health checks, targeting male orientated workplaces on the East Kent Coast where employees are from the lowest deciles. They have also identified taxi drivers (due to the sedentary nature of their work) as benefitting targeting with the Health Check offer.

KCHFT are also identifying, mapping and contacting faith groups to build relationships and understand how they might encourage take up with BME communities.

This work is on-going, and outcomes of this work will be available at the end of April 2019.



## **Ensuring that the Children's Public Health Service reduces health inequalities in early years and maternal health (Race/ gender)**

Services offer both a universal offer and targeted offer to families and young people to support those most in need. Work has been carried out by the Public Health Observatory to review the equity of School Health Public Health services. This illustrates that the services reach a disproportionate number of young people from deprived areas when comparing to the population. This utilises data from the KID.

The Health Visiting service also offers a number of targeted interventions to provide more intensive support alongside mandated checks. This includes a new vulnerable families service which will work with women identified antenatally – the service will have additional resources to provide this service in areas of high deprivation.

## **Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm with regard to Sex, Disability, Race and Age**

In November 2018, a new Safeguarding operating model was implemented, to provide a more responsive and effective service. As a result, there has been an improvement in Safeguarding Enquiries that are completed in under 90 days. In 2018/19 this was 1,749 closures, an average 145.8 per month. This contrasts with 1,018 90-day closures a year earlier, an average 84.8 per month.

Due to the increase in timely closures individual Safeguarding needs across all protected characteristics are responded to more quickly. Timescales for case closures has also improved and is now taking place within 24-48 hours of enquiries concluding. This means that any outstanding actions or recommendations are addressed sooner. Another impact of the new Safeguarding operating model is an increase in the application of Making Safeguarding Personal principles and how individual's wishes inform the enquiry process.

The Children's Safeguarding Team have continued to support the development of key policy areas such as the Gangs Strategy, Domestic Abuse and Modern Slavery through undertaking equality analysis in order to build in effective response by commissioned services.

## **Improved life chances and outcomes of children, young people and vulnerable adults through service developments and transformation**

KCC's Children and Young People's Directorate (CYPE) working with partners, continues to respond creatively to the demands placed upon children's services by forming new partnerships, reshaping services and adopting new ways of working to ensure children and families are supported where and when they need help.

The approach is to move away from high cost, reactive spend towards well targeted, earlier intervention. To improve services, CYPE promotes earlier help, integration and multi-agency working through Change for Kent Children (CfKC) and clear and strong leadership, provided by the new CYPE Corporate Director. This combination

of strategic approaches will bring about more positive outcomes for children, young people and their families.

By understanding what works for children, CYPE has adopted a systematic and outward looking approach to remodelling Children and Young People's services through CfKC. This programme has been informed by learning from national research, national best practice and its evaluation through the DfE's Innovation Programme and Partners in Practice programme. This work has focussed in the first instance on developing a practice framework for integrated working across CYPE.

The driving ambition for the new integrated practice framework is to reduce escalating demand on children's services, better supporting children, young people and their families at an earlier stage, without recourse to statutory intervention. By ensuring a new whole-systems approach to childhood which takes into account the equality considerations, we will improve access for children, young people and families to consistent and timely support to meet their needs, enabling them to succeed in learning and life.

The needs of ex-service personnel continued to be addressed. Working with partners such as Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association (SAFFA) and KERS, KCC has supported people with benefits, housing and legal advice to provide additional support for individuals and their families.

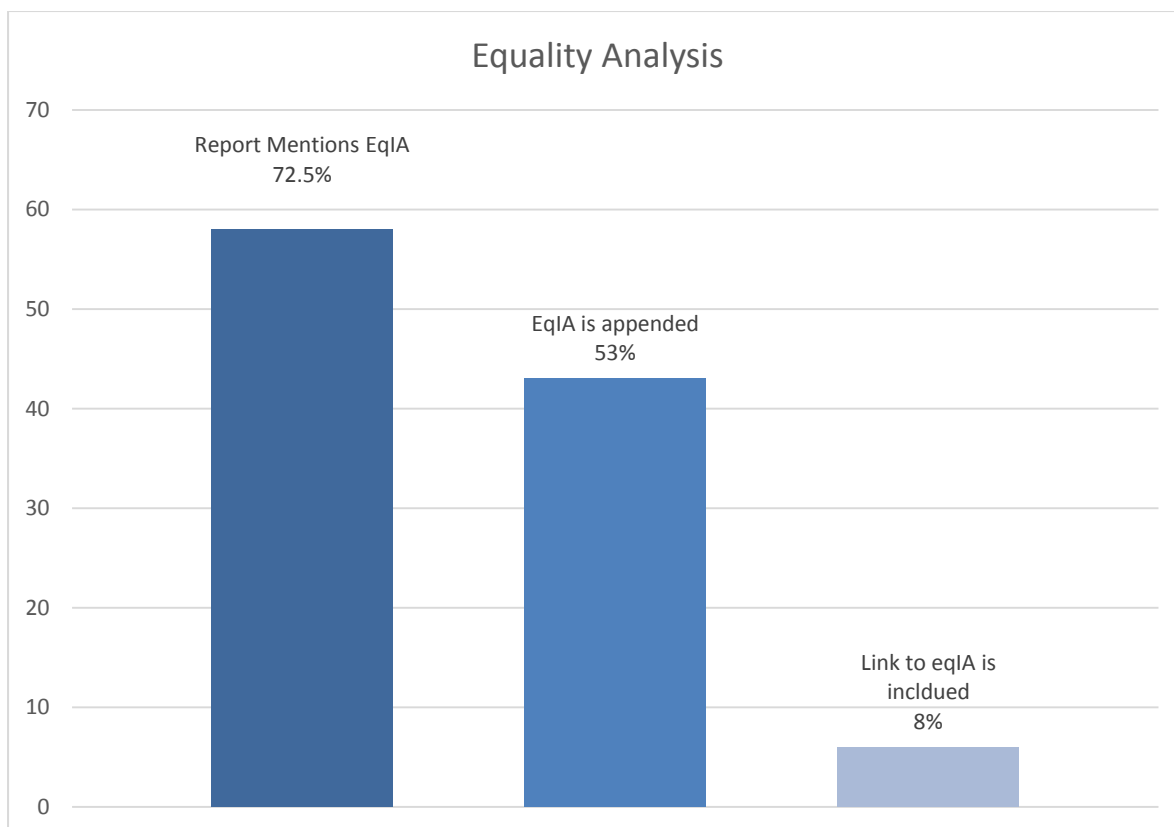
### **Ensure that the number of Black and Ethnic Minority people and women in the mental health system is reduced**

In 2017/18 the Mental Health team put benchmarking and data collection processes in place to better understand pathways for women, especially those who have experienced domestic abuse, black men and veterans to help identify gaps in service provision and experience. In 2018/19 there were still a disproportionate number black and minority ethnic people referred into the service. There is a plan for the expansion of the Early discharge planning team. It is expected that there will be a more timely response ensuring the early identification of needs and recovery promotion of each person referred into service and all care packages will be reviewed to ensure they are right for the individual.

## **Justice and Personal Security**

The Corporate Equality group led by General Counsel continues to challenge the organisation to ensure fairer outcomes for protected groups who live work or otherwise access assets and services in Kent.

In 2017-18, 63% of all decisions referred to equality but only 19% had an EqIA attached for consideration. This was a considerable decline from the previous year and led to measures being put into place by Democratic Services. 2018/19 has seen a considerable improvement with 72% of reports mentioning equality considerations and 53% with EqIA's appended to committee reports.



Governance and Law provides an independent appeal process for transport and schools for children who have been refused a place to their choice of primary and secondary school.

Panels are made up of volunteers both within the education sector and those with no educational background. Annual training is provided for all members. Following feedback from external clerks and panel equality and diversity has been incorporated into core training to ensure a fair and equitable process for those appealing for school places.

## Participation

### Interfaith working

It was agreed that KCC would support the development of local work through making an online resource available which aids local knowledge and join up between faith groups. This involved the authority contacting hundreds of faith organisations by phone, letter and email. Approximately 300 faith groups registered an interest. These groups were then added to an online data base, allowing people to search for faith groups close to them and to also build relationships for interfaith work <https://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/interfaith-working> .

The website was launched During interfaith week at a celebratory event was held in County Hall. Mr Jatinder Singh Birdi, the co-chair of [the Interfaith Network](#) gave the keynote speech. KCC organised a series of open days “*Diverse Open Doors*” where

the Gurdwara in Gravesend, the Hindu Temple in Gravesend, Canterbury Cathedral, Canterbury Mosque, Union Street Methodist Church and the Thanet and District Reform Synagogue opened their doors to the community during interfaith week. This was very well received by both faith communities and local participants.

Consultation activity in the council continues to grow. The requirements for staff and managers have now been set out in the Operating Standards and no consultation is published without equality analysis and is a critical part of the decision-making process. Services are expected to review the findings and review their Impact Assessments accordingly.

Of 4,481 complaints received to date in the financial year 2018/19 year 79 were categorised Equality and Regulatory of which 16 were discrimination based.

Of the 16, those that had lessons learned recorded:

- 3 resulted in improvements to service including training and a change in process
- 1 was given an apology and explanation.

The service has delivered customer service and complaint handling training to around 100 staff in frontline teams. The training focuses on expecting and delivering respect and supporting staff to understand the council systems from the viewpoint of the resident. This work will continue in 2019/20.

All Technology products supplied via ICT comply with the ICT Technology Strategy, which is itself aligned to the 'Digital Inclusion Standards' as laid out by the Government Digital Service. This Includes:

- Digital Accessibility Compliance is now built in as a mandatory requirement of all Technology delivered under the commissions constructed by the Technology Strategy & Commissioning Team, and all future procurement activities, regardless of the vendor used, and in line with the EqIA process
- The team have engaged with existing suppliers to improve systems already in place
- Digital Connectivity: Ensuring that Users have the tools and channels to access business technology in a mobile and flexible way
- As part of its Technology Strategy, the TC&S team is carrying out work to audit its public facing websites and systems to ensure that they are accessible, and meet the standards set out in the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018. To date 47 systems have been audited in 2018 and where required remedial actions are being undertaken to rectify any shortcomings. The Audit programme continues at a pace
- These works are being carried out in partnership with internal Staff Groups as well as our Digital Service providers. Following on from the development of

the Baseline Accessibility Requirements (BAR), this has been improved on during the last 12 months along with the development of a robust auditing framework.

Infrastructure continue to engage with the Government Digital Service (GDS), to influence the interpretation of the new regulations and how organisations should best respond. To this end we are ensuring that our approach aligns directly with GDS guidance.

The Kent Sport Equality & Diversity Statement is the statement of the Kent Sport and the Kent & Medway Sports Board and a requirement to comply with the highest level (Tier 3) of Sport England's Sports Governance Code as Sport England provides Kent Sport with funding. It is published online and accompanied with a Board diversity action plan. Although there was no adverse impact identified from the screening, some specific areas were highlighted for consideration in the EqIA action plan to ensure that protected groups are not negatively affected by work undertaken.

Representative promotional material that reflects a broad range of people participating in sport has been developed as a result of equality analysis. For the protected characteristics of Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation and Race it was considered that engagement with these groups would need to be addressed by with new partners and networks for promotion of opportunities and consultation.

Village Hall grants have been given in support of village halls that enable an environment based on inclusiveness, where all users and potential users benefit from the facility. Improving the fabric of community venues has improved their usability. For example, a key activity in support of village halls and other community venues has been the investment in facilities and improved access for disabled people. Support for improved central heating and insulation in such venues has also opened their use to wider numbers of people across the community.

### **The quality and range of services are improved through increasing engagement with service users and carers**

The involvement of children and young people in Kent is positive. We engage many of our children and young people in children's services to influence the decisions that affect them.

Children and young people are encouraged to get involved through the Kent Youth County Council (KYCC), the three Children in Care Councils and a Young Adult Council. Over 22,000 young people took part in the KYCC elections in November 2018, electing 60 Youth County Council Members, seven of whom represent Kent on the UK Youth Parliament.

KYCC have a social media sub-group that facilitates and promote issues and concerns that affect young people on social media. Recent campaigns included:

- A curriculum for life
- Promoting positive mental health

- Anti-bullying awareness, effects and training
- Co-production of a Leaving Care Charter

KCC has continued to grow the Young Adult Council (YAC), Our Children and Young People Council (OCYPC) and the Super Council with over 70 children and young people involved. We ensure that young people are involved at the beginning of the social work journey by involving them in the training and recruitment of Social Work students at Kent and Canterbury Universities.

KCC has gathered a range of diverse voices from our children and young people in care through “Challenge Cards” – which allows all young people to make even the most senior officer in the Council accountable. The views of this group have been integral to our change programmes.

The newly updated ‘[Kent Cares Town](#)’ website for Children in Care and Care Leavers, provides an ‘online’ Challenge Card so now reaches a wider audience. There are also multiple ways for young people to get involved advertised on the website and the website is now available in a variety of different languages

## Key challenges for 2019-20

Evidence provided through the directorate annual reports suggests that overall the council made progress against some of its equality objectives and the processes and procedures that are needed to mainstream equality activity into core business is in place

However stubborn areas of inequality persist for protected groups in the County across all the services that KCC provides. Resource pressures linked to constrained public finances and demographic changes provide a significant challenge to ensuring fair outcomes for all in Kent.

For example, the attainment gap for children with disabilities persist in Kent as it does national, further there are a greater number of young people with disabilities that are Not in Employment education or Training than their non-disabled peers. In Adult Social Care people are living longer with more complex needs

Through equality analysis and observing of the Public Sector Equality Duty whilst developing policies, planning strategies, commissioning and delivery services, KCC will be better able to develop person centred approaches that are built on the strengths and assets of communities of place and interest. This will help to ensure that people are at the heart of all KCC’s policy thinking and work.

## Background Papers

Adult Social Care Annual Equality & Diversity Report, 17 July 2019

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s91403/Item%2010%20-%20Annual%20Equality%20and%20Diversity%20Report.pdf>

Children Young People and Education Annual Equality & Diversity Report, 28 June 2019

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=91062>

Growth Economic Development and Communities Annual Equality & Diversity Report, 3 July 2018

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=91023>

Environment and Transport Annual Equality & Diversity Report, 17 July 2019.

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s91301/Item%2010%20-%20Report%20-%202018-19%20GET%20Directorate%20Equality%20Review.pdf>

Equality and Human Rights Commission: Assessment of the performance of public authorities on the specific duty to publish equality information (England)

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-equality-duty/news-and-updates-on-the-equality-duty/>