

Local Authority Sites Interim Action Plan November 2021

The evidence journey to improve the social care WRES

Local Authority: Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Senior Director responsible for the Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standards: Jon Rouse, City Director

Local Authority Programme Lead: Peter Tomlin

Staff Voice Lead: Jackie Bloxham and Charlene Stapleton, in addition to our race equality networks within the council

Number of (direct) Employees: 1109

Summary of how this action plan has been agreed (signed off) and how it will be monitored, reviewed and outcomes evaluated:

Stoke on Trent city Council is committed to meeting the requirements of the Workforce Race Equality Standard for Social Care and this is our first publication against the standard.

The Council submitted its workforce data against the standard to the national WRES team in October 2021, as per the requirements.

As our first action plan, the council has tried to focus its efforts where the most impact for change can be felt. However, recognises the need for the plan to be flexible, so outcomes can be purposeful and achieved with the most success to bring about positive change across the organisation.

The Council's Race Equality Group have been involved in the development of this action plan, but more involvement and input are desired by extended groups that are still in their infancy within the organisation. This includes our Ethnically Diverse (ED) Staff Network.

The action plan will be monitored and evaluated by the Race Equality Group monthly and by Strategic Workforce on a quarterly basis. The Race Equality Group will adopt this action plan as part of their work programme in supporting the actions going forward, such as policies being brought for review.

Introduction (Senior Sponsor/Lead): Peter Tomlin

Peter is the Acting Director of Adult Social Care for Stoke on Trent City Council and has worked for the Council since November 2018. Peter has a background in both Childrens and Adults Social Care, with 33 years' solid experience managing at strategic and operational levels, and broad experience which includes working at all levels in Health, Adult and Children's Social Care spanning the public, voluntary, charity and private

sector. As the lead for the Council on Place Based Partnerships Peter is committed to ensuring the services that are provided and arranged with communities, reflect the diversity of those communities, and sees the implementation of the WRES as a key part of this work.

Introduction (Staff Voice Lead): Jackie Bloxham (Adult Safeguarding) & Charlene Stapleton (Children and Family Services)

My name is Jackie and I am currently the Adult Safeguarding Team Manager, and have worked for the City Council for since 2007 with 22 years' experience as a social worker in the field of Adult Social Care. I am a member of the Race Equality Group and have coordinated the WRES submission by working closely with Charlene and other internal partners who have been integral to the commencement of this piece of work and the continued implementation of the WRES.

I fully support the WRES implementation in Stoke, as an established employee with a number of years' service I fully appreciate the need to challenge the culture of silence around race equality and encourage conversations that may be challenging. Our main aim for the WRES is to make Stoke-on-Trent Council a truly anti-racist employer, that will recognise and celebrate diversity for the benefit of current and future employees.

My name is Charlene. I am the Step Up to Social Work Programme Manager for the West Midlands region based with Stoke-on-Trent Council, within Children and Family Services. I have worked for the Council since July 2021 with 9 years' experience as a social worker, bolstered by my 10 years' experience prior, in the criminal justice and youth justice services. I am a member of the Council's Race Equality Group and work in partnership with Jackie to support the creation and implementation of the WRES to ensure it meets the needs of our service area.

I am in support of adopting the WRES within our local authority as it is a symbol that racism exists in the here and now. Being a part of the WRES means supporting a change that benefits all, yet focuses on those who have worked extremely hard, but been marginalised and overlooked for many years. The heightened discussions about racism in the last two years has given confidence that more and more people acknowledge racial discrimination happens, enabling ethnically diverse people to speak out and open the ears of others, who may have thought they were listening or were never listening at all when discussions of racism arose.

Racism is being widely understood and recognised as not just one-off individual events, but being systemic and structural. The WRES gives hope that these systems and structures can be dismantled, same as they were created. The WRES gives accountability for this much needed change to occur, not just by the actions of the victims of racial oppression, but those that also benefit from it. I want the WRES to create new and varied ways of working with and supporting ethnically diverse people, to make a shift change that better balances the books.

Workforce Race Equality Standard: Action Plan May 2022

Metrics	Details of the action you will take to identify change in this metric	Timescale to start seeing a change	How we will know that this action is achieved
METRIC 1: Percentage of ethnically diverse staff in each of the council pay bands compared with the percentage of staff in the rest of the workforce	See detailed action plan below – points 1 - 9	April 2023	Workforce data will show an increase in representation in these tiers.
METRIC 2: Comparative rate of ethnically diverse staff being appointed from shortlisting	See detailed action plan below – points 10 - 15	April 2023	A greater proportion of staff being appointed from ethnically diverse backgrounds in relation to the size of the workforce.
METRIC 3: Comparative rate of ethnically diverse staff entering the formal disciplinary process	See detailed action plan below – points 24 - 28	April 2023	The rate will be comparative to the percentage of ethnically diverse staff within the workforce.
METRIC 4: Comparative rate of ethnically diverse staff entering the fitness to practice process	See detailed action plan below – points 24 - 28	April 2023	The rate will be comparative to the percentage of ethnically diverse staff within the workforce.

Metrics	Details of the action you will take to identify change in this metric	Timescale to start seeing a change	How we will know that this action is achieved
METRIC 5: Comparative rate of ethnically diverse staff accessing funded non-mandatory CPD as compared to white staff	See detailed action plan below – points 1 - 9	April 2023	Self-reporting of ethnically diverse staff feeling their individual CPD needs are being met. Greater number of ethnically diverse staff attending funded opportunities.
METRIC 6: Percentage of ethnically diverse staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from patients, relatives, or the public in last 12 months	See detailed action plan below – points 16 - 23	April 2023	A reduction in reports, not through a lack of reporting but a lack of incidents.
METRIC 7: Percentage of ethnically diverse staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse in the last 12 months from a. Colleague b. Manager	See detailed action plan below – points 16 - 23	April 2023	A reduction in reports, not through a lack of reporting but a lack of incidents. Staff will have completed training, which will hopefully lead to more harmonised working relationships and anti-racist work culture.
METRIC 8: Comparative rate of ethnically diverse employees leaving the organisation during the last year	See detailed action plan below – points 10 - 15	April 2023	There will be a comparative rate of ethnically diverse leavers reduced from the previous 12 months.

Metrics	Details of the action you will take to identify change in this metric	Timescale to start seeing a change	How we will know that this action is achieved
METRIC 9: Percentage difference between organisations' senior management membership and its overall workforce	See detailed action plan below – points 1 - 9	April 2023	Reduction in the percentage difference.

Please detail any other action / activities that you will roll out to support the SCWRES:

Health and Well Being

- To ensure Health and Well Being policies and services meet the needs of ethnically diverse staff, such as Covid absence and sickness levels which would disproportionately impact ethnically diverse staff.

Employee Voice

- Support ED staff to be supported by, not discriminated against, through any of our Council policies.
- The Council has established an Ethnically Diverse Staff Network, alongside the Race Equality Group to actively support and contribute to the WRES, as well as anti-racist practice and policy within the Council. This will assist in improving staff engagement and implementation of the WRES across the wider workforce.
- Develop a Comms campaign to regularly promote what the WRES is achieving and to generate membership and support within the networks and groups.
- Distribute annual staff survey to capture staff data and voice, as fully as possible.

Staff Engagement

Do you have a staff engagement plan or policy? Yes

Please summarise the key points from the staff engagement plan / policy

The City Council has always sought to take a lead in ensuring its procedures and roles are inclusive for everyone when recruiting, retaining and developing its employees. However, it is accepted that this is not without its challenges and may not always have been as successful as the Council, may have aspired to. As a Council we want our city to be fair, inclusive and a safe place for everyone. We want to ensure that our people have the best possible start in life, as well as access to every opportunity open to them as they grow.

Our key engagement objectives are:

- To strive to remove as many barriers as possible that lead to any form of racial inequality and discrimination within the City Council and the activities it carries out
- To make a very clear statement that the Council is actively and proudly anti-racist and will challenge such behaviours
- To consult with ethnically diverse staff and other colleagues to understand what barriers exist in an open and non-judgemental way, this will be done via surveys and network groups
- To demonstrate that we are a truly inclusive council where everybody can thrive and be their full selves
- To promote the positive messages coming from the work and efforts of ethnically diverse staff
- To promote and provide updates on the progress of the WRES to support ongoing confidence that racial inequality is being prioritised within the City Council

Workforce Race Equality Standard: Action Plan Objectives

Objectives can be drawn from the 6 WRES themes or address wider themes and areas of importance within individual local authorities.

- Leadership (Metric 1 and 9)
- Recruitment and retention (Metric 2 and 8)
- Learning and career development (Metric 5)
- Culture and staff experience (Metric 3, 4, 6 and 7)
- Health and wellbeing
- Employee voice

WRES Theme and Metric: Leadership (Metric 1 and 9)

Local Authority Objective	To create a diverse leadership team that represents the workforce and communities we serve.
Link to Local Authority Corporate Plan	Ensure all managers and leaders have access to development and training opportunities that equips them with the skills to manage in a more flexible, agile and commercial environment

WRES Theme and Metric: Recruitment and Retention (Metric 2 and 8)

Local Authority Objective	To be a fair, inclusive and honest recruiter.
Link to Local Authority Corporate Plan	Set clear targets for increasing the number of Ethnically Diverse employees in our workforce and managing actively towards those targets, using tested approaches from other organisations and sectors

WRES Theme and Metric: Learning and career development (Metric 5)

Local Authority Objective	To promote development and for potential to be realised in all roles.
Link to Local Authority Corporate Plan	We are determined to develop a diverse and inclusive workforce...where everyone feels supported, their voices are heard and they all have equal prospects of progress based only on merit. One of our equality objectives is to improve access to employment for groups which experience barriers to work and as a large local employer we will lead by example and ensure our jobs are accessible to everyone in a fair and open way

WRES Theme and Metric: Health and wellbeing

Local Authority Objective	To care for our staff and their needs.
Link to Local Authority Corporate Plan	Encourage employees to think about their own health and wellbeing and feel confident to make suggestions on actions we could take to support this

WRES Theme and Metric: Employee voice

Local Authority Objective	To listen, hear and challenge our thinking and ways of working.
Link to Local Authority Corporate Plan	Improving race equality at the City Council is one of the organisation's more important priorities. We recognise that we have more work to do in this area and have taken steps to create a more inclusive workplace culture in which the voices of people of diverse ethnic minority are heard and they can play an active role in shaping our workforce policies and culture.' This includes creation of the Race Equality Group and the Ethnically Diverse Staff Network

DRAFT

Workforce Race Equality Standard: Action Plan May 2022

Objective 1: To enable ethnically diverse staff to be able to reach their potential in the workplace by:

- Increasing the proportion of ethnically diverse senior staff (paying particular attention to Tier 1-4 of the pay band)

Ensuring access to individually funded continued professional development (CPD).

<p>Lead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childrens Principal Social Worker • Adults Principal Social Worker • Learning and Development Academy • Team Managers • HR • Communications • Race Equality Group
<p>Data from WRES Metrics</p>	<p>1, 5 & 9</p>
<p>Specific Actions</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supervision policy is reviewed to support the regular identification of training and other CPD opportunities and conversations about race and additional intersectional inequality considerations, such as being transgender 2. Supervision policy to record any training not approved; managers to provide constructive feedback and suggest alternative options for learning where possible, including agreeing support needed for a future application CPD content. 3. Individual Annual P.L.A.N is effectively utilised by managers to encourage and support long term career development and aspirations of ED staff, including active discussion to identify barriers and agree positive actions. 4. Mentoring is established to enable shadowing opportunities are available for staff to promote understanding of a range of social care team environments. 5. Internal CPD opportunities to grow our own, such as AMHP, ILM, Practice Educator and apprenticeships are clearly advertised and promoted across Social Care. 6. Enhanced reporting to help understanding of race equality concerns relating to access to non-mandatory training 7. Staff are supported to take time out from regular duties (1 day per month) to commit to learning and development 8. To promote funded CPD opportunities more widely within the workforce, with a focus on CPD opportunities specific to ED staff, such as the Moving Up programme.

	9. Implement a Talent Matrix and policy to identify ED staff who are ready to be put forward for progression CPD opportunities
Indicators of improvement: What does good look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1% increase each year. Workforce data will show an increase in representation in these tiers.• Self-reporting of ED staff feeling their individual CPD needs are being met and active discussions are consistently held in supervision and other appropriate forums.• Increased number of ED staff attending funded CPD opportunities. This to be aligned to the workforce plan for the workforce development
Timeframe	April 2023
Progress / Updates	

DRAFT

Objective 2: To ensure all recruitment, selection and retention policy and practices are inclusive for ethnically diverse staff and applicants

<p>Lead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR • Communications Team • Senior Managers and Team Managers • RE Group
<p>Data from WRES Metrics</p>	<p>2 & 8</p>
<p>Specific Actions</p>	<p>10. Target a wider, more diverse ED talent pool for all job opportunities and ensure our recruitment communications are inclusive for the diverse audiences we engage with. Promoting in communities, with partners and media platforms accessed by ED individuals.</p> <p>11. Identify clearly on our Council recruitment page and adverts that Stoke is an inclusive antiracist employer. This to be bolstered with diverse commentary and/or photos from staff members within the council.</p> <p>12. Review and update our fair recruitment and selection process to ensure we are delivering best practice. With a focus on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising • Panel representation • Assessment processes • Feedback to candidates • Feedback from candidates <p>13. Review, update and deliver our Recruitment and Selection training for managers and senior manager, to ensure all managers have the tools, knowledge and skills to recruit staff in an inclusive way.</p> <p>14. Ensure advertised roles Grade 6 and above include ED staff in the shortlisting and interview process.</p> <p>15. Analyse the workforce data annually for existing patterns and use data from focused Exit Interviews with all ED staff leaving the Council. This will include examining ED staff experiences to identify work-based barriers, increase retention and assess whether the Council is achieving an anti-racist culture.</p>
<p>Indicators of improvement: What does good look like?</p>	<p>1% increase each year. Workforce data will show an increase in representation in these tiers.</p> <p>Self-reporting of ED staff feeling their individual CPD needs are being met and active discussions are consistently held in supervision and other appropriate forums.</p> <p>Increased number of ED staff attending funded CPD opportunities. This to be aligned to the workforce plan for the workforce development.</p>

Timeframe	April 2023
Progress / Updates	

DRAFT

Objective 3: To enable ethnically diverse staff to work in an environment free from bullying, harassment and abuse, both internally and via the public.

<p>Lead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSW Childrens • PSW Adults • HR • Health & Safety Team • RE Group • Communications Team • Jon Rouse • Elected Members
<p>Data from WRES Metrics</p>	<p>6 & 7</p>
<p>Specific Actions</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. Review, amend and update our current internal training for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion to ensure all staff, managers and senior managers have knowledge of the experiences of ED staff and the skills to move us into an anti-racist workplace 17. Mandatory and bespoke training to be provided/commissioned for all tiers of employees. To involve opportunity for uncomfortable conversations and friendly challenge about race across the workforce. 18. The effectiveness of the commissioned training to be evaluated to measure results against data. 19. Review, amend and update our current Workplace Violence Policy and Procedure to ensure it recognises diversity and inclusion to allow ED staff to feel confident in reporting incidents. 20. Supervision policy is reviewed and updated to encourage the reporting of bullying, harassment and abuse and how agree actions can be recorded and escalated. 21. Establish an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy across the Council to encompass practice measures required in creating a wholly anti-racist culture and workforce. 22. Review and update the Staff survey to capture and analyse data to determine what patterns of bullying, harassment and abuse exist for ED staff, and implement appropriate safeguards and wellbeing measures. 23. Clear Respect Statement to be issued from Jon Rouse and Elected Members regarding the Council's stance on Harassment, Bullying or Abuse in the workplace and via the public. This to be communicated in various ways and places internally and externally. Alongside, posters and communications shared regularly within the workplace to promote an inclusive and supportive work culture

Indicators of improvement: What does good look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A reduction in reports, not through a lack of reporting but a lack of incidents.• An awareness and understanding of policies, procedure and reporting lines that ED staff feel is accessible and accountable.• Staff will have completed training, leading to more harmonised working relationships and anti-racist work culture.• Increase in commissioned specific anti-racist training, with a focus on encouraging trainers from diverse backgrounds• Team Managers reporting confidence in being able to support and manage an inclusive workforce• Increased reflective supervision being held and/or reported surrounding issues of racial inequality and the promotion of social justice.
Timeframe	April 2023
Progress / Updates	

Objective 4: To ensure internal policies and procedures of a disciplinary nature are fair, inclusive and proportionate.

Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSW Childrens • PSW Adults • HR • RE Group
Data from WRES Metrics	3 & 4
Specific Actions	<p>24. Review and update internal policies and procedure regarding disciplinaries and fitness to practice referrals to ensure fairness and are antiracist and anti-discriminatory.</p> <p>25. Review, update and deliver/commission manager and senior manager training relating to the handling of staff disciplinaries and fitness to practice procedures.</p> <p>26. Annual audit of formal disciplinary cases and fitness to practice case of ED staff and non-ED staff to measure against fairness and the implementation of policy being proportionate and appropriate.</p> <p>27. ED staff to be included in disciplinary and fitness to practice panels and/or consultations where another ED staff member is the subject of the disciplinary, to ensure the panel understands and recognises ED experiences and processes are transparent.</p> <p>28. Supervision policy is updated to include clear reference and recording of practice concerns</p>
Indicators of improvement: What does good look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rate will be comparative to the percentage of ED staff within the workforce • To close the gap in the disproportionate rate between ED and white staff, such that there is no difference in the likelihood of ED and white staff entering a formal process. • The rate will be comparative to the percentage of ED staff within the workforce.
Timeframe	April 2023
Progress / Updates	

Objective 5: Examine issues facing ethnically diverse staff and improve the working experience, to improve staff satisfaction and retention.

Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications Team • RE Members • EDS Network Members • Team Managers • Jon Rouse
Data from WRES Metrics	N/A
Specific Actions	<p>29. To continue to promote, grow membership to and hold monthly Race Equality Group meetings to discuss racial parity across the service and drive actions to achieve this</p> <p>30. To continue to promote, grow membership and hold bimonthly <i>Ethnically Diverse Staff (EDS) Network</i> meetings to enable staff within these groups to share workplace experiences and celebrate achievements in a safe place.</p> <p>31. Wellbeing resources are actively researched to ensure they are inclusive of ethnically diverse staff needs and are shared widely with teams.</p> <p>32. To consider the creation and employment of an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator/Manager to give consistent steer and momentum to the WRES implementation.</p>
Indicators of improvement: What does good look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular conversations about staff wellbeing and promotion of relevant resources. • Improved staff retention and wellbeing.
Timeframe	April 2023
Progress / Updates	

Objective 6: To ensure ethnically diverse staff are supported to have their voices heard by sharing their experiences to influence the future vision of the Council, so all staff needs can be recognised and supported.

Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications Team • EDS Network • RE network
Data from WRES Metrics	N/A
Specific Actions	<p>24. Develop a comms campaign to promote the Network and Working Group and the work it is achieving to generate membership and support</p> <p>25. Ensure an annual staff survey is rolled out to be able to capture staff data and voice, as much as possible.</p> <p>26. Establish a process for more ED staff to attend and/or contribute to decision making forums whilst working to increase longer term representation.</p>
Indicators of improvement: What does good look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater awareness and understanding internally of the Council's work and commitment to race equality. • Increase in staff self-reporting. • Council utilising staff data to better represent workforce practices, policies and procures. • Wider workforce decision making is shared and more inclusive and representative of the workforce and communities.
Timeframe	April 2023
Progress / Updates	

Action Plan signed off by	 Peter Tomlin
Position / Role	Interim Director of Adult Social Care Health Integration and Well Being
Date	12 August 2022

DRAFT