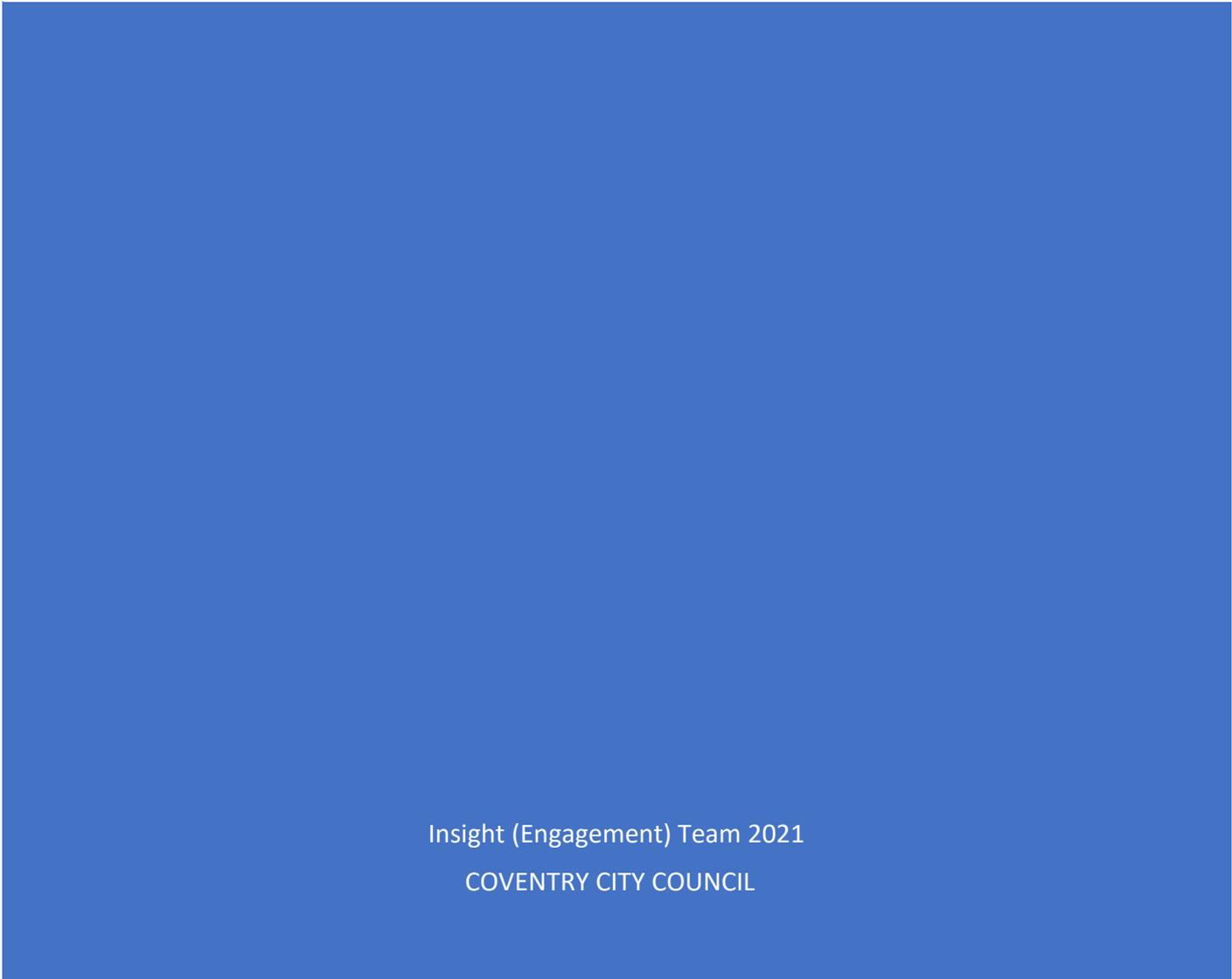




EQUALITY OBJECTIVES  
CONSULTATION  
2022- 25  
DECEMBER 2021



Insight (Engagement) Team 2021  
COVENTRY CITY COUNCIL

## Equality Objectives Consultation 2022-25 Report

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### Executive Summary

- A total of 16 responses were received to the online survey
- Responses from Trade Union and Disability Equality Action Partnership (DEAP) representatives were also gained.
- All objectives gained overall agreement.
- Objective 5 Increase participation from residents and visitors with disabilities in sporting and cultural activities including events in the city, gained unanimous agreement
- Most dissent was found for both Objective 3 To Increase year on year the percentage of applications for employment received and appointments made to candidates who are either LGBT+, declare a Disability or are from Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic backgrounds and Objective 4 Increase the effective use of Council services in key areas, with 5 respondents disagreeing with both objectives.
- A number of respondents felt they could not comment on the objectives without more specific information.
- The unlawfulness of positive discrimination and use of quotas was raised.
- Some of the terminology was questioned such as use of customer and what the definition of integration would be.

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### Introduction

Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Council is required to publish one or more equality objectives in order to further the aims of the general equality duty.

The current set of five equality objectives for the Council were adopted in April 2020 for a period of two years. They will therefore expire at the end of March 2022. A new set of equality objectives need to go live from April 2022.

The new set of equality objectives were consulted on from November 1st – December 6<sup>th</sup> 2021.

### Response Rate

A total of 16 responses were received to the online survey.

The objectives were also discussed with Trade Union and feedback given at TU D&I Working Group meeting 17<sup>th</sup> November as well as with members of the DEAP on 18<sup>th</sup> November

### Analysis of Findings:

The survey looked at each objective in turn asking initially whether respondents agreed with the objective and then gave an opportunity for respondents to give comments.

### Objective 1 Create a foundation to drive improved access to services through better use of equalities data

	%	Count
Yes	87.5%	14
No	12.5%	2

### Comments

This is essential as actions need to be evidenced based and not based on assumptions.
As the British population is 84% white any equality just means less equality for white British born people
Positive discrimination is unlawful under s.13 the Equality Act 2010. Disproportionate positive action that is not a proportionate means to achieving a legitimate aim is also discrimination under s.13 EQA 2010.
Positive action is only lawful if it meets the criteria set out under s.158 / 159 of the equality act 2010. How does this policy or practice comply with the principle of equality of

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<p>opportunity for all and / or lawful positive action?</p> <p>Quotas are unlawful as they do not ensure equality of opportunity for all.</p> <p>selecting persons for recruitment or promotion based on immutable characteristics is unlawful. Selecting persons for recruitment or promotion based on what they "look like" or other characteristics using underrepresentation as justification is potentially unlawful, unless robust evidence can be provided that this is a proportionate means to achieving a legitimate aim. See EHRC guidance on when positive action can be applied. See Mr M Furlong v The Chief Constable of Cheshire Police: 2405577/2018.</p>
<p>Agree in principle. It. Will be interesting to see the criteria for customers most in need!</p>
<p>Reach out and work with these groups, listen to their needs</p>
<p>You would need to consider customers individually- not just having digital solutions which will alienate those in digital poverty.</p>
<p>These objectives are generally good, but whether achievable is another matter unless larger groups of disabled with experience of disability are involved.</p>
<p>Word customers seems a bit odd to me - prefer understanding more about the people of Coventry we aim to serve</p>

Most comments were supportive of the objective. Reaching out to all groups was stressed without relying on digital solutions.

A suggestion was made not to use the word "customer" and replace it with people of Coventry.

One respondent referenced the fact that quotas are unlawful, and that positive discrimination can be seen as unlawful.

**Objective 2 Develop better understanding of our diverse communities in order to shape and deliver the Council's Integration policy and practice for the City and its residents.?**

	%	Count
<b>Yes</b>	80%	12
<b>No</b>	20%	4

Comments

<p>Why does the council have to pander to a minority</p>
<p>A bit vague, what does Integration really mean in practice</p>
<p>Whilst this appears on the face of it to be a laudable aim, it must be ensured that in practice these policies or practices do not give preferential treatment to persons sharing a protected characteristic, and are indeed used to foster good relations between persons sharing a protected characteristic rather than advocating for positive discrimination that</p>

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treats persons who do not share a protected characteristic less favourably and / or inciting hate or discrimination towards persons who do not share a protected characteristic.
Don't know enough about this to comment
This should include education of diverse communities in British standards, & institutions, equality, tolerance, & how to join in with the indigenous population , rather than forming separate ghettos of nationality , religion, or skin colour.
Volunteering roles for skilled refugees. while waiting to have work rights, should be considered as this will help with integration and support their mental health
The focus needs to be a jointed up process to ensure that all groups are inclusive.
Always remember even different groups have varied equality needs within them groups
Yes great.
Reference to the Migration Team implies a focus on refugees and migrants. If this is the focus it is detrimental to those born, raised and/or already living in the City who may fall into minority groups.

A number of comments referred to the focus on refugees and migrants and that this might exclude other groups.

One respondent felt that the term integration needed more explanation.

**Objective 3 To Increase year on year the percentage of applications for employment received and appointments made to candidates who are either LGBT+, declare a Disability or are from Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic backgrounds.**

	%	Count
<b>Yes</b>	68.8%	11
<b>No</b>	31.2%	5

This objective and objective 4 received the highest number of respondents who disagreed with it.

### Comments

<p>Why have only some Equality strands been selected? Everyone has "protected characteristics" which may be constant, multiple and/or situation based, so why specify only some groups as under-represented? For example men are under-represented in overall council employee figures and women are under-represented in senior grades, also the age profile of the council does not reflect that of the city. Why is this easily quantifiable under-representation not included? It is not appropriate to only choose certain aspects of under-representation when it is known others exist.</p> <p>A general objective of encouraging all under-represented groups, would enable a more</p>
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<p>nuanced response to council wide and more local services under-representation re employees. For example, recruitment drive to encourage men to enter the "caring" professions or women to become HGV drivers.</p> <p>Although not explicit, the objective implies affirmative action in recruitment processes, whilst appropriate for certain job categories, does this not imply a discriminatory process and is this justifiable?</p>
<p>Most people who are mostly scared to view there opinions are still not happy with homosexuality</p>
<p>Agree to some extent. Everyone should have access to employment with NO discrimination.</p> <p>As far as appointments are concerned it should be the best person for the job. I don't agree with quotas, so many black people, so many women etc. It may be that a post had 90% black people or women who are best at the job, to me that is OK.</p>
<p>positive discrimination and / or disproportionate positive action that favours persons sharing a protected characteristic is unlawful unless the council can provide robust evidence that giving preferential treatment to persons sharing a protected characteristic is a proportionate means to achieving a legitimate aim, as defined under s.158 / 159 equality act 2010. The council must be able to show that it does not have a policy or practice of treating persons sharing a protected characteristic more favourably, and it must be able to show that any measures to treat persons sharing a protected characteristic more favourably are time limited.</p>
<p>Agree in principle. Again interesting to see what the strategy is.</p>
<p>This is clearly discrimination against anyone not in the identifiable groups mentioned. The Council should be promoting &amp; hiring purely on merit, with no consideration of skin colour, sexual preference, nationality etc.</p> <p>Even now I believe that a white, straight, male, Coventrian, has less chance of being employed by the council than other people that might fall into the groups identified by the Council.</p> <p>The only preferential treatment of those groups, should be clear advertising that the Council is happy to employ all people whatever their colour, religion, gender, etc, which I think it does already, although this could be made clearer.</p> <p>The Council already discriminates in employment against single parents by most of their jobs being full time, or fixed hours, or without remote working, but this group are not included above.</p>
<p>I agree to be inclusive and open but also need to focus on the other groups to ensure workforce have right skills and opportunities such as young people. low skilled, lone parents</p>
<p>Maybe we should return to the days when different groups had to be employed, percentages were used then but thats not equality . Employment should be based on the persons ability to fulfil the duties of their employment with adaptations if necessary,integration is possibly a more apt word.</p>
<p>Yes. PLEASE can we increase the application for employment from people who actually live in Coventry too?</p>

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A number of comments referred to the fact that recruitment should be based on merit and some questioned why certain protected characteristics has been chosen to focus on.

### Objective 4 Increase the effective use of Council services in key areas

	%	Count
Yes	66.7%	10
No	33.3%	5

This objective and objective 3 received the highest number of respondents who disagreed with it.

#### Comments

Decisions need to be evidenced based and not made on assumptions. Does this include all protected groups?
If they integrated into our society we wouldn't need to treat them any different
Lots of words but what does it mean in practice?
positive discrimination and / or disproportionate positive action is unlawful unless it complies with the criteria set out under s.158 /159 equality act 2010. The council consistently favouring persons sharing specific protected characteristics, or from particular socioeconomic groups over others does not comply with the principle of equality of opportunity for all.
I thought this was already part of the Councils remit.
Again this is clearly favouring people by where they live, rather than by their need. More Council money will be spent on expensive projects, which favour only certain groups,
Yes, being customer/ community focus is good idea as there is evidence that residents want services but do not know what is available.
Sorry but I do not agree with this idea of targeted areas getting all the funding while other areas get neglected. The city should be seen as that and areas of need should be able to put forward their need for consideration via their councillors and all need assessed on an equal basis with funds shared equally, in an ideal world.
Also increase partnership working - ambitious: can we get a council person on every main project happening in the city?
Insufficient information upon which to base an opinion.

There was a general feeling that certain areas keep getting funding whereas other areas of the city do not gain the same benefits.

## Objective 5 Increase participation from residents and visitors with disabilities in sporting and cultural activities including events in the city

	%	Count
Yes	100%	16
No		0

Overwhelming agreement with all 16 respondents in favour of this objective.

### Comments

Really good objective
enabling the participation of persons with a disability can be lawful, provided that measures taken are proportionate.
Getting into the city is not easy. If you are walking you have to negotiate the ring road. The other alternative is to use the sub ways, not an healthy option as most of them smell and being a woman I do not feel safe using them. The detrimental environmental solution is to use the car.
A good idea, special thought should be given to blind people, who have more difficulty travelling to & from sports / events, & being in crowded, unfamiliar places. It would help disabled people access sports facilities if the Council had a dedicated sports facility in the centre of town, in fact we used to have one but the Council closed it down when Coventry was the 'European city of Sport' in 2019. It would help if the Council was interested in all people having easier/cheaper access to sports facilities, the Go CV card is a help, but for instance I know of many people who have never been to 'The Wave' or like me & my daughter go rarely, because it is so expensive as compared to the old swimming pool.
This need to be measured and more specific about how it is going to be achieved
But I think you need someone who is disability aware in all areas of disability , as disabled people are not all in wheelchairs, or stuck at home in isolation. Disability comes in all shapes and forms and all are entitled to give opinions on how different disabilities effect normal activities that able bodied can partake in. They need to be listened to most importantly.
Please also consider women and carers.
great one.
There are many grassroots clubs that have been asking for support for several years with no success. This objective has been present in numerous Council strategies but the reality of accessing any support is negligible. An example being Synergy Gymnastics Club which has run in the City for over 40 years and has been seeking assistance in acquiring a unit. Many other Councils have provided similar (this is evident from travelling to those cities to participate in competitions). Other small clubs in other indoor sports have closed due to lack of venues. The support that could have been provided to other sports via a unit run by Synergy was outlined in a business plan submitted in 2008. The status quo remains

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It would be great if the activities to be delivered under equality objective 5 could still include sessions which people can participate in from home – as the nature of some disabilities means that ‘virtual’ or ‘online’ sessions can be more inclusive this way.

Is there any information that you think would help deliver these objectives?

They should integrate with us not the other way round

I would like to see robust evidence that these measures of positive discrimination and / or positive action comply with the criteria set out under s.158 / 159 of the Equality act 2010.

Buses that actually turn up and seats that are not filthy from the kids walking all over them.

The Council could organise trips for disabled, blind, or aged, to concerts, theatre, etc. The Council needs to know more about the needs of these groups, many of whom don't use/have access to ,the internet, or have difficulty using a phone.

Do you know what our residents want/need to meet their requirements?

Inform all citizens where ever possible via media, council tax documents, notice boards in public places, local rag mags or newspapers, emails .

There have been no specifics to comment on.

Any other comments

I suppose as Coventry always does the rates will go up by the maximum amount to pay for it. What a waste of money while people are forced to live on virtually nothing after paying there household bills

The council is using taxpayers money to pursue policies or practices of positive discrimination and / or disproportionate positive action without giving taxpayers the opportunity to have a say in how their money is being spent. There is more than enough taxpayers money being spent on these agendas at government level, at public sector bodies and in the private sector. This is not a proportionate means to achieving a legitimate aim, and taxpayers money could be spent more efficiently to improve infrastructure and services in the region.

Not really, because I (like most people), believe that no matter what the views of citizens of Coventry, the well paid executives who run the Council , & the departments who think they know best, will do whatever they want anyway !

Just look at the stupid 30 mph speed limit on London Road, which nobody can understand, Soon there is to be a shedload of money spent on road alterations in the Old Church Road / Proffitt Ave area, with a 20 mph speed limit, comments were invited, but what's the point the 'qualified' planners are gagging to implement the changes, like a kid with new toys.

An opportunity to comment on actual proposals would be welcomed

## Trade Union feedback given at TU D&I Working Group meeting 17th Nov

- What about those service users who find it difficult to access services due to digital exclusion/poverty? The wording of this draft equality objective (4) seems to imply that the onus is on service users to better access services.
- It's relevant to think about HMOs and their occupation by diverse groups
- Achieving higher rates of disclosure by employees of their equality information is important before the workforce diversity objective can be progressed.
- Consideration needs to be given to the real living wage and those disadvantaged members of society living in poverty

## DEAP meeting 18th Nov:

- Work on the 'Include Me' project links to the proposed equality objective 5
- Disabled people getting into work is also as important as them being supported to participate in sport /leisure activity
- The objectives need to be more specific. Are there any penalties for non-compliance?
- Families in certain parts of the city are also excluded from participation.

## Equal Opportunities Profile of Respondents

Respondents were asked the following question with no obligation to complete the questions

Sex	Number of responses
Male	6
Female	7
Prefer not to say	3

Age	Count
16-24	
25-34	1
35-44	2
45-54	3
55-64	3
65-74	4
85+	2

Ethnicity	Count
White British	8
White Irish	1
White Gypsy or Irish Traveller	1
Other White Background	
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	
Mixed White and Black African	
Mixed White and Asian	
Other Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Background	
Asian or Asian British Indian	1
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	
Asian or Asian British Chinese	
Other Asian Background	
Black or Black British African	
Black or Black British Caribbean	
Other/Black/African/Caribbean background	
Arab	
Prefer not to say	4
Other	

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Sexuality	Count
Asexual	1
Bisexual	2
Heterosexual	4
Lesbian	1
Prefer not to state	6
Other (please specify)	

Religion	Count
Buddhist	
Christian	7
Hindu	
Jewish	
Muslim	
Sikh	1
No Religion	3
Atheist	1
Prefer not to say	3
Other (please specify)	

Disability	Number of responses
Yes	8
No	8
Prefer not to say	

5 of the respondents were Council employees or Elected Members