

Equality Objectives

Overview and summary for consultation

Public Sector Equality Duty

- Different groups of people experience inequalities – both in employment and other life outcomes.
- This can be due to one or more of the following "protected characteristics": Age, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Disability, Ethnicity, Religion or Belief, Marital Status, or Pregnancy and Maternity.
- The council is committed to reducing these inequalities in everything that it does, both as a service provider and local employer.
- However, over the next 4 years there are some specific areas we really want to focus on – these are our equality objectives.

Why have we chosen these equality objectives?

For residents and service users

- A central theme of the overall work of the council is reducing health inequalities and improving healthy life expectancy. There is a particular focus on children and young people, not only as they are a targeted equality group, but we also recognise that:
 - improving outcomes and closing gaps for children can have the long-term impacts on closing persistent inequalities across all groups
 - many children and young people are likely to experience disadvantages and poor outcomes based on having another protected equality characteristic (e.g. disability, gender, ethnicity, etc.)
- To understand more about the equality issues in Slough, please see the [Slough Insights Data Pack](#).

For our workforce

- The council recognises that it must also focus on improving equality in its workforce and that to deliver its service priorities, it needs to recruit and retain an inclusive, diverse and skilled workforce.
- To understand more about equality issues on our workforce, please see the [Workforce Equality Data Report](#).

Health inequalities in Slough

Health measure	Slough	RBWM	South East	England
Healthy life expectancy (M)	58.1	69.7	65.5	63.1
Healthy life expectancy (F)	60.3	70.3	65.9	63.9
Mortality rate: cardiovascular (deaths per 100k under 75)	108.9	51.5	63.1	76.0
% physically active adults (150+ minutes activity per week)	51.6%	76.2%	70.5%	67.3%
Low birth weight: term babies (under 2,500g)	4.4%	2.5%	2.4%	2.8%
Year 6: prevalence of obesity (incl. severe obesity)	28.4%	17.5%	20.0%	23.4%
Children in relative low-income families	24.4%	-	14.6%	19.5%
Rate of Children in Need (per 10,000 0-17 year olds)	397.5	-	329.1	334.3

Slough has a young population, with 25% of residents aged 0-15. This is the second largest proportion of children aged 15 and under in England and Wales.

The healthy life expectancy for Slough residents is 10 years lower than the neighbouring Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM).

Proposed equality objectives (1)

1. Provide quality services for children and young people with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities).

We will measure this by:

- Increasing the percentage of new Education Health and Care (EHC) Plans issued within 20 weeks.
- Improving how we ensure the voices of children, young people and their parents/carers are heard.
- Linking equalities objectives with business planning and performance management to improve outcomes for children with SEND.
- Improving educational outcomes for these groups.

2. Improve outcomes for children and young people who are more likely to be disadvantaged based on their protected characteristic.

We will measure this by:

- Increasing the uptake of 15 hours of free early education.
- Increasing the numbers of those achieving a good level of development at age 2-2.5.
- Improving educational outcomes at key stages 2, 3 and 4.
- Improving outcomes in 16-17 year old participation in education, employment and training.
- Improving outcomes in qualifications at age 19.

3. Work with partners to target health inequalities and well-being between those from different protected characteristic groups.

We will measure this by:

- Improving the monitoring of intersectional health inequalities.
- Increasing the number of child development reviews.
- Reducing the prevalence of childhood obesity at reception and year 6.
- Reducing the prevalence of adult obesity and increasing physical activity.
- Improving take up on NHS health checks.
- Lowering the under 75 years of age mortality rate from preventable diseases.

Proposed equality objectives (2)

4. Improve the collection of employees and applicant equalities data to ensure we are data-led in our actions to improve workforce inclusion and equality.

We will measure this by:

- Improving completion rates of employee equalities information rates across all categories of protected characteristics.
- Utilising our new applicant tracking systems to collect equalities information and monitor our recruitment processes.

5. Recruit, retain and develop an inclusive workforce, where diversity is valued, and one that is more representative of our local communities.

We will measure this by:

- Improving our score on diversity-based questions in the all-employee staff survey (year on year improvement from moderate to good).
- Improving the representation of minority groups in the council's workforce (based on the economically active rates of the wider Slough community).