

## **Appendix 1**

### **EVERYONE'S BATTLE, EVERYONE'S BUSINESS**

#### **WE WILL TACKLE INEQUALITY IN BIRMINGHAM, SO EVERY CITIZEN CAN ASPIRE**

#### **A STATEMENT OF INTENT FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND THE CABINET**

Events of recent months demonstrate the extent to which we remain an unequal society. Opportunities for too many of our citizens remain a condition of their race, or class or sex – or a combination. This has never been acceptable to us as a council.

It's also clear that despite our best intentions over many years, progress is not happening quickly enough. We want to see this change. Over the short, medium and long term, Birmingham's success should be judged by the extent to which the aspirations of everyone can be fulfilled. We know this won't be easy, but that must not stop us doubling down on our efforts to see change happen.

Our approach will need to be both long term and systemic. We will need to think again about how we stimulate the right kind of growth in our city so that all can benefit. We will need to think about how our Council and other public services work, so that they focus on those families and communities that we all too often describe as hard to reach, when in fact they are hidden in plain sight.

It's incumbent upon us to change how we work so that we see the reality of their lives and change what we do, in so far as resources and legislation allows us to do. This means involving people in the design and delivery of our services but also in decisions that matter to them.

This statement sets the key areas where the Council is best placed to influence major change, both in its role as a major employer and as the democratically accountable, civic leadership body for the city as a whole. But we are clear that if we want real change, tackling inequality must be everyone's business. We all need to step up. These are our initial thoughts and proposals, but we want to work with everyone in Birmingham to ensure we get this right and deliver the fundamental change that people in our city need.

#### **THE COUNCIL WILL LEAD BY EXAMPLE AS AN EMPLOYER**

We believe that Birmingham City Council should take a lead as an employer and our goal is to ensure that our workforce properly reflects the communities we serve. While it will take time for us to attain this, we should in the meantime become a beacon for equal opportunities employment and leave no stone unturned in a quest to be a representative and diverse organisation:

- To address the current, visible imbalance in gender and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic representation across the authority, shortlists for all Birmingham City Council (BCC) staff vacancies, at all levels, will include at least one Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and one female candidate, in addition to our efforts to seek representation across all protected characteristics in our workforce. In order to do this, we will work hard to attract a diverse range of candidates. We will also require recruitment agencies working on the Council's behalf to follow this shortlisting rule, so they actively seek out diverse talent from across communities.
- All Council interview panels will have Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and female members. We will develop shared panel membership arrangements with neighbouring authorities, following the example of the London boroughs, to ensure that panels remain representative if suitable panel members from within BCC are not available for a given interview.
- Working with independent HR experts, we will undertake a root and branch review of our HR policies, procedures, training and other related activity so that we are assured that we are best in class when it comes to equal employment practice and support. We will work with our managers to ensure that changes are adhered to, and with our trade union colleagues to ensure that this is a genuinely shared endeavour.
- Working with our staff and the support of an external, respected equalities organisation, we will co-design a fast track recruitment and development programme for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals. This will include:
  - a) Investing in young Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic talent, by providing professional development, support networks, executive coaching and full access to other internal and external development opportunities.
  - b) Removing any institutional barriers to progression and developing career pathways for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff members so that they can develop their careers in the same way that many white professionals take for granted. This will include actively managing the Council's vacancy list to support talented individuals to work for periods of time in roles so that they can actively manage their careers and develop their skills. Staff should not have to choose between career progression or job security.
  - c) Addressing the serious lack of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic representation at senior level with a targeted advancement programme to progress staff from Grade 6 and 7 posts to Assistant Director and Director roles.
  - d) Creating a dedicated permanent inclusive workforce team to implement the above actions and to provide additional support to the organisation.

- Every elected Councillor and every member of staff will be required to participate in mandatory equalities training, which will take place at least annually and include programmes to challenge and tackle unconscious bias.
- Renewing our corporate relationship with the Staff Equality Networks through a formal concordat and regular “check and challenge” meetings between Networks, Council Leadership Team and Cabinet.
- We will be transparent and open: publishing our Race Pay Audit and Workforce Equality data and using these to set robust diversity targets for the Chief Executive and Council Leadership Team, which will form part of the Council’s Performance Monitoring framework.
- The Equalities and Cohesion Star Chamber, chaired by the Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, Community Safety and Equalities will provide robust internal challenge and scrutiny of the Council’s performance against the Equality Objectives and drive sustained improvements to our internal equalities practice.

### **AS CIVIC LEADERS, WE WILL CHALLENGE INEQUALITIES IN EVERY COMMUNITY**

- We will deliver our commitment to expand the Council’s Equalities and Cohesion team, so we have the in-house expertise and leadership to deliver on our mission to tackle inequality right across our city.
- The Covid-19 crisis and the anticipated economic downturn will have a dramatic effect upon an already challenging pattern of inequality and poverty in our city. We need to work with communities to properly understand the impacts and together, decide the immediate and longer-term measures we need to take to tackle inequality in all its forms. We will explore the potential for establishing a Citizens Assembly or similar body to steer this work, as we want to ensure that the city’s diverse communities are fully represented and all voices, especially those that often struggle to get a hearing, are part of this crucial project.
- The Council will sponsor the second phase of the Birmingham Poverty Truth Commission, to ensure that the voices of those with lived experience of poverty have a direct influence upon how we deliver our services and make policy.
- We have already launched the 2020 Birmingham City Council Civic Leadership with Operation Black Vote, with a diverse cohort of fifteen participants. We will continue and expand our work with Operation Black Vote to invest in, enable and grow a new generation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic civic leaders.
- Covid-19 has brutally exposed the health inequalities affecting Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and we have already called for national action to address these. Together with colleagues in the London Borough of Lewisham, we

will deliver our joint review of African and Caribbean health inequalities by Autumn 2021 and if successful, establish similar reviews into the health inequalities affecting other Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities.

- Poverty pay and wage injustice have no place in a genuinely inclusive city. We will continue our campaign for businesses to pay the Real Living Wage and submit our application to become a Living Wage City by Living Wage Week in November 2020 – the next step in our battle to drive poverty pay out of Birmingham altogether.
- The Council will revisit its commissioning and procurement practices and the Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility to guarantee that all opportunities to promote and facilitate inclusion are being taken and ensure that social value policy is refocused upon efforts to challenge structural inequalities in the city.
- Challenge other public sector partners and anchor institutions in the city to join us in drawing up a Birmingham Employment Charter to ensure best practice in diversity and increase recruitment across all sectors from the most excluded communities in the city. This will draw upon the work we have already been doing with the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) to develop local wealth building and inclusive growth.
- We will deepen the excellent partnerships with the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sectors that served us so well during the COVID-19 crisis. We will work with them to ensure that organisations representing diverse communities can be properly heard and external funding sources that are not available to the Council levered in to support grassroots community development and strengthen civil society.
- The City Council will review and refresh the Faith Covenant, which we first signed in 2014, to ensure that we work with and give a voice to our ever more diverse family of faith communities in the city. We will also re-establish a formal body to oversee the work of the Covenant and our relationship with faith groups.
- Cabinet Members will call out exclusionary behaviours by declining to participate in any public panels that do not include female and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic representation.

#### **WE WILL CELEBRATE AND SHARE OUR CITY'S STORIES OF DIVERSITY AND DYNAMISM:**

- Birmingham's heritage is a rich and diverse mix of stories, experiences, opinions and challenges. From the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the present day, it is a history of startling technological and economic innovation; of change and migration; of campaigns for basic democratic rights and hard-fought battles to secure social justice for every citizen. We will work to ensure that the stories of all our communities are shared,

explored and commemorated appropriately. This will include steps to properly champion the telling of “unheard histories” and a review of how we can better support and facilitate key community events and celebrations.

- We will work with schools and local historians to develop a new curriculum and resources that tell the “Birmingham Story” – fully exploring its diversity, challenges and its meaning for the Birmingham of the 2020s and beyond.
- Following the launch of our Schools Equality Toolkit: “All Different, All Equal”, we will work with our partners in the education and community sectors to develop a new Race Equality education programme for use in Birmingham’s schools.
- We will review the appropriateness of local monuments and statues on public land and council property. We will also ensure that the plaques accompanying our monuments properly and fully explain their historical context, where appropriate.
- We will review our street and public space naming protocols to ensure that potential names properly reflect and respect the city’s history and communities, together with our wider Heritage Strategy.
- We will review the displays of art in our civic buildings to ensure they also tell the full story of Birmingham, including the renaming of a room in the Council House to properly mark the contribution of BAME civic leaders.