

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMITTEE  
REMOVING BARRIERS: RACE, ETHNICITY AND EMPLOYMENT  
SUBMISSION FROM ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

**Employment support and advice-**

- What provisions are in place to help people from ethnic minorities to access employment support and advice;
  - Partnering with and providing funding to local organisations that specialise in services to the local international community so that we can co-ordinate recruitment skills sessions with BME citizens.
  - Translation Services are provided to job applicants on request
  - Contributing support to employing an ethnic minority housing outreach worker
  - School visits as part of Employability skills programme
  - Attendance at local job fairs to promote Aberdeen City Council's commitment to attracting ethnic minorities into employment
  - Specific section of public access Corporate website devoted to promoting the benefits of Equality and Diversity and providing links to various organisations and online resources
  - Aberdeen City Council is a key member of the North East Scotland Equalities Network
  
- What provisions are in place to recognise and address the lower employment rates among some ethnic minority groups compared to others;
  - Supporting the Ethnic Minority Forum to hold consultation, information and awareness events.
  - Use of Equalities Monitoring to identify where the local demographic profile is not reflected in Aberdeen City Council's workforce.
  - An Equalities group, dedicated to issues of race, has been constituted within the Human Resources service to address any identified issues.
  
- Are there any innovative approaches being taken to address the challenges some people from ethnic minorities may experience in trying to access employment advice and support?
  - Evening Employability Skills Sessions facilitated by HR staff using local organisations to liaise with the BME community to attract attendees. These sessions sought to provide training and

guidance in how to compose a CV as well as candidate interview skills.

### **Recruitment, retention and promotion—**

- What evidence is there that discrimination in recruitment, retention and promotion is an issue in Scottish workplaces;

Though this is not an issue for Aberdeen City Council (given the results of recent Diversity and Equality surveys) possible indicators that could be deemed as evidence could include -

- Proportionally less BME applicants successful in recruitment compared to non BME
  - Workforces do not mirror the local demographic profile
  - Disproportionately low numbers of BME in promoted posts
  - Numbers of Grievances related to Diversity and Equality
  - Number of Harassment claims related to Diversity and Equality
  - Number of Employment Tribunal Claims related to Diversity and Equality
  - Trade Union feedback, both formal and informal
  - Staff representative forum feedback
  - Negative indicators in Equality and Diversity surveys
- What are the barriers that lead to unequal outcomes (including lower rates of employment and employment segregation)?

Though not necessarily applicable to Aberdeen City Council, the following are potential barriers that may lead to unequal outcomes

- Potential unconscious bias in recruitment
- Education reasons
- Cultural reasons
- Influence of community peers/contemporaries
- Inadequate marketing of potential employment opportunities e.g. utilising the wrong marketing channels for specific groups

### **Promoting positive action—**

- What measures are being taken to tackle workplace discrimination and segregation;

While internal surveys show that workplace discrimination and segregation haven't been identified as being an issue for Aberdeen City Council, measures that the Council have utilised to ensure this remains the case include –

- Staging an Equalities Fair for Employees at Corporate HQ (event to highlight issues and impact of the Equality Act 2010)
- Equalities Roadshows to mirror the Equalities Fair held at remote Council premises
- Mandatory Equalities Training (Key part of induction process, online module for all employees to complete)
- Continued membership and support of the European Coalition of Cities Against Racism
- Supporting the efforts to challenge and eliminate prejudice incidents throughout the city through the Aberdeen Prejudice Incidents Partnership.
- Publicity campaigns within Aberdeen City Council highlighting benefits of diverse workforces
- External publicity campaign highlighting benefits of diverse workforces
- Partnering with local organisations that specialise in services to the local international community to co-ordinate employability skills sessions with BME citizens.
- 
- Is there a need for a scheme that recognises positive action taken by employers (a “double tick” scheme for example);
  - Some kind of standard/framework would be beneficial to organisations to benchmark against and derive best practice from. However, it is the view of Aberdeen City Council that care must be exercised in designing such a scheme so as not to discourage applications and/or reduce engagement from the very groups we are looking to encourage into our organisation.
- What are the examples of good practice that have improved outcomes, and if so what has been the key to their success?
  - Diversity and Equality survey commissioned to highlight potential improvement areas.
  - Use of external provider to design the Diversity and Equality survey free from possible bias.

- Use of guaranteed interview scheme as part of Two Tricks accreditation. Ensured that this is a key part of recruitment and selection training and guidance.
- Development of specialist teams that each focus on a protected characteristic so that expertise is developed in addressing equalities issues.

**Aberdeen City Council**

**July 2015**