

Update on the progress made against the Race at Work Charter

Background

- The Business In The Community (BITC) Race at Work Charter was launched in partnership with the UK government in 2018.
- The Charter principles are underpinned by the 2017 McGregor-Smith Review recommendations as set out within the [Race in the Workplace](#) report.
- The review found that people from Ethnic Minority backgrounds were underemployed, underpromoted and under-represented at senior levels.
- *'All organisations want to recruit from the widest pool of talent to help them progress. It is key to future productivity and performance. The McGregor-Smith review recommended that for organisations to benefit from the wealth of diverse talent on offer - greater progress was needed' .*

Race at Work Charter Requirements

- The Race at Work charter is composed of **seven key principle calls to action** for leaders and organisations across all sectors.
- In summary they are a bold set of principles and actions designed to drive forward a step change in the recruitment and progression of ethnic minority employees.
- By signing up means clear demonstration of taking practical steps to ensure workplaces are tackling barriers that ethnic minority people face in recruitment and progression and that their organisations are representative of the diverse communities they serve.

Seven Calls For Action



Appoint an **Executive Sponsor** for race



Capture **ethnicity data** and publicise progress



Commit at board level to **zero tolerance** of harassment and bullying.



Support equality in the workplace is the **responsibility** of all **leaders and managers.**



Take actions that support ethnic minority career **progression.**



Support **race inclusion** allies in the workplace



Include **ethnically diverse-led** enterprise owners in supply chains.





Appoint an **Executive Sponsor** for Race

Provide visible leadership on race and ethnicity in their organisation and can drive key actions such as setting targets for ethnic minority representation, briefing recruitment agencies and supporting mentoring and sponsorship

- David Pattison (Chief Operating Officer) has been appointed as Executive Sponsor for Race Religion and Belief Forum and this has led to all Staff Equality Forums now having Executive Sponsors.
- SEB Sponsors engage and meet with staff forums monthly, and commit to being accessible and available to all members of the forum.
- SEB Sponsors provide monthly feedback at leadership meetings on the ongoing activities of their respective forum.
- SEB Sponsors as well as 60+ senior members of staff have or are currently mentoring employees. 25 of 75 mentees have been 'promoted internally' since the launch of this scheme.



Capture **Ethnicity Data** and publish progress

Capturing ethnicity data is important to establishing a baseline and measuring progress. It is also a crucial step towards an organisation being able to report on ethnicity pay

- The Council has published in 2022 the first ethnicity pay gap report and has committed to producing this annually. As of April 2023 new ethnicity pay gap reporting Guidance, which has led to amendments to the most recent 2021-2022. Combined Pay Gap report being presented today
- The number of employees from black and Asian ethnic groups holding positions at pay grades GR09-GR17 has doubled since 2018/2019, with a 100% and 106.3% increase, respectively
- 42.1% of apprentices in 2021-2022 were from ethnic minority groups, making them a higher proportion than of the workforce as a whole (31.8%). This is positive progress, but also impacts the 'pay gap'
- Annual Workforce Equality Monitoring is published, and shows workforce presentation against city population, workforce changes, recruitment summaries, disciplinary, grievance & dismissals.



Commit at board level to zero tolerance of harassment and bullying

The Race at Work Survey revealed that 25% ethnic minority employees reported that they had witnessed or experienced racial harassment or bullying from managers. Commitment from the top is needed to achieve change.

- The Council has a clear policy which sets out the Council's commitment to zero tolerance towards harassment and bullying:

The City of Wolverhampton Council has a zero approach to any employee being subjected to harm, threats of harm, bullying and harassment, discrimination or any inappropriate behaviour or language in the workplace. – Dignity at work policy statement 2021

- The Council have also introduced a safe space scheme which allows employees to reach out to an independent third-party organisation 'SeeHearSpeakUp', should they wish to report their concerns and/or seek advice. If an employee feels unable to report their concerns using the grievance procedure
- The Council have also revised their grievance, disciplinary and management of attendance policies and procedures to ensure that all grievance, disciplinary and management of attendance review panels are ethnically and gender diverse when making decisions.



Supporting Equality in the workplace is the **responsibility** of all leaders and managers

Make clear that supporting equality in the workplace is the responsibility of all leaders and managers. Actions can include ensuring that performance objectives for leaders and managers cover their responsibilities to support fairness for all staff

- Strong message from Chief Executive and Strategic Executive Board around the importance of EDI being a standing item on all team meetings.
- Each Directorate has an Equality Plan which shows the steps the Council is taking to tackle service inequality.
- Council awarded the Race Code Charter Mark early this year . ‘RACE Code Action Plan’ now in place, we are tracking work taking place to increase opportunities and the support provided to staff to achieve their full potential.
- Equalities is a main feature of the Breaking Through (former Brilliant Leaders) Programme, ensuring future leaders understand the importance of equalities
- All SEB members and Heads of service are registered as mentors .



Take actions that supports ethnic minority career progression

Capturing ethnicity data is important to establishing a baseline and measuring progress. It is also a crucial step towards an organisation being able to report on ethnicity pay

- Wrap around support is an opportunity for individuals who have been unsuccessful at an interview to receive bespoke support to understand feedback, working with an OD advisor to create a development plan. Originally launched via Race Religion and Belief Forum, but is available for all staff.
- There are several avenues for Coaching and Mentoring, via our internal mentoring and external providers via the West Midlands Employee coaching pool. Internal mentoring also has a focus on reverse mentoring.
- Leadership development: Aspire into Management and Breaking Through (former brilliant leaders). Both programmes are specifically for employees to progress to the next career step, AIM is for staff looking to progress into management. Brilliant leaders was specially for ethnic minority staff to move into senior management.
- Other measures in place include ; interview skills, shadowing oppoirtuntties, matrix working opportunities, and involvement with projects/programmes via staff equality forums.



Support **race inclusion** allies in the workplace

Provide support for inclusion to allies to promote race equality in teams, at work and within their communities. 26% of White employees say that they would like more support from their employers

- One City Allyship Approach has Council Allies that encourages all staff to become allies and how to be visible in their support. Race Allies are being developed as part of the One City Allyship Approach.
- We have subject matter experts who sit on the WMCA - Race Equality Taskforce. This mini matrix of managers are an example of race allies as they champion race equality not just in Wolverhampton but in the wider west midlands region.



Include **ethnic diverse-led** enterprise owners in supply chains

Employers should ensure Black-owned businesses and enterprises are part of their supply chains, monitoring timely payment and contract value. These actions will contribute to creating role models for young people and the wider community, as well as economic inclusion.

Procurement and EDI at working closely to ensure opportunities are made available to as

many businesses as possible, and ensuring that all business and enterprises have similar equality principles to our own.

- City Council is working with The Wolverhampton Black Business Network and Asian Business network to help develop training and support for businesses to put themselves forwards for procurement opportunities
- Working with procurement to strengthen EDI arrangements within tendering and evaluation process as well as contract condition & award and contract management & monitoring process .
- The creation of the EIA Assurance Board will ensure there is fair and robust discussions around the requirements of future contracts.