

The most important part of
our equalities policy...



...is you

BARNET
LONDON BOROUGH

For more information: www.barnet.gov.uk/equality-diversity

Barnet Council's Equalities Policy

Our view of Barnet as a place

Barnet is diverse. The borough's diversity significantly contributes to our success and makes Barnet a good place to live. We recognise that many of our residents, businesses and visitors come to Barnet knowing that their individual contributions as citizens will be valued and respected by all and will further enhance Barnet's reputation. **As a council we will continue to value the diversity of the borough and acknowledge the richness it brings helps to make Barnet a good place to live.**

Barnet is multilingual. In 2008 over 130 languages were spoken in our primary schools. We accept our children and young people will want to embrace their linguistic heritage. We expect that English will be the common language of communication and participation. **We will encourage our citizens to become confident in using English as their language of communication and complete the British Citizenship programme to ensure that Barnet continues to thrive as a good place for current and future generations.**



Barnet is cohesive. We have achieved this partly by delivering high quality council services, but also, because as a council we understand our residents have a shared sense of belonging to Barnet. We expect Barnet citizens to be aware of their civic responsibilities and actively contribute to the economic, moral, emotional and physical well-being of the borough. However, we recognise that deep-seated disadvantages do still remain in Barnet which may reduce the borough's cohesive feel, and that a small number of individuals suffer a number of interrelated disadvantages. **We want to reduce this multiple disadvantage by working together with Barnet citizens and our key partners to analyse the underlying**

causes so that we can deliver effective responses. **Barnet is changing.**

As a successful suburban borough, people want to come to Barnet. Our large scale regeneration will result in 23,000 more new mixed-tenure homes making us one of the fastest growing populations in London. We anticipate that our new communities will be younger and more diverse. This will challenge us. We need to ensure our established settled communities do not feel displaced or excluded from feeling part of the borough particularly in the way they access and receive public services. We will use data intelligently to improve our understanding of communities' differing experiences of public services. **We will ensure that quality public services are delivered in transparent and equitable ways which promote community cohesion and reduce community tensions.**

How we respond as an organisation

Barnet Council is a community leader. Barnet's communities are not interested in who delivers their public services as long as they are of a high quality, and effective. We believe we should have minimal interference in peoples' lives and respect the private autonomy of our citizens. Our ideal society is one where Barnet residents are doing things for themselves, where they define the problems they face and play a role in tackling them.

We will develop joint commissioning expertise with partners to respond to and shape our citizens' expectations, to deliver the best outcomes with them and help build their resilience to respond to unexpected challenges.

Barnet Council as a procurer. The Council will be seeking to develop procurement expertise so that we can meet needs and aspirations innovatively, whilst delivering value for money. We wish to make sure that neither the procurement process nor the subsequent contract management lead to discrimination. **We are committed to finding efficient, flexible and innovative suppliers who through the**



contract process will work with us to improve outcomes and deliver legal obligations. We are particularly keen to increase our dealings with local small and medium businesses many of whom are members of Barnet's diverse communities.

Barnet Council as an employer. As an 'employer of choice' the Council has worked hard to incorporate equalities considerations into our employment policies and practices. Promoting equality of opportunity to our staff is a fundamental commitment. As we develop the future of the organisation we will seek to offer training and employment opportunities that fully cultivate their skills and talent to serve the community in Barnet.

We want to create workplaces of high productivity and skill, where people can flourish and maintain a healthy work-life balance reflecting the full talent and diversity of our communities. **We want staff, whether employed directly or by partner organisations to achieve their potential and understand their role in helping the council meet its statutory equality duties. We expect all staff to understand the council's equalities values and apply them to their job roles.**

This policy sets out our values, our approach to equalities and understanding of how we are placing it at the heart of everything we do. It should be read in conjunction with our Equality Scheme which sets out in more detail how this is turned into action.