



# Co-operative Councils

## Innovation Network

### SOCIAL OUTCOMES



Bury Council

## Co-Producing Boroughwide Inclusion

In Bury we've truly put inclusion at the heart of everything we do.

A short while ago we reviewed our ways of working in the Council and identified a real passion and commitment to equality from our workforce, communities, and leaders. This review also highlighted room for improvement in how we place inclusion at the heart of our systems, processes and culture, both internally and across the borough.

We started by getting the basics right; putting in place a clear Inclusion Strategy which included a new set of equality objectives. To develop the Strategy and drive our inclusion priorities we brought together a wide cross section of people in an Inclusion Working Group. The group is a mix of senior leaders with responsibility for some of our core functions, as well as staff from all service areas who have a passion for inclusion and driving this agenda across our borough and communities. It provides a unique mix of governance, co-design and engagement all in one and has been the engine room behind all things inclusion. Over the past year the group's developed even further, expanding its membership and reach as part of our public service partnership, Team Bury, and working to drive forward the inclusion agenda across public service partners in the borough.

Whilst we started at the top with our Inclusion Strategy and appointment of a Director level post with a focus on inclusion, the last year has seen an emphasis on practical activity to put inclusion at the heart of how we work in Bury.

### **A shared Bury definition of what inclusion means for Bury**

In designing our approach to inclusion, we looked at what's important to Bury people. That's why we give equal consideration to 13 protected characteristics, which as well as the 9 legally protected characteristics also includes looked after children and care leavers, military personnel, reservists and veterans, carers and the socio-economically vulnerable. What this means in practice is that our Equality Impact Assessments consider all thirteen areas and, when we talk to our staff and communities about inclusion and celebrate diversity, we give equal weight to each of these groups.

Talking about inclusion the Bury way has also seen us work together with staff and residents to agree the right language and terminology to talk about equality. This co-operative approach led to us developing a guide to inclusive language and bringing together staff to explore openly and honestly what this means in practice. A good example of this is how we're now working to avoid using the term 'BAME' and instead talk about our Communities Experiencing Racial Inequality.

### **Shouting about our commitment: Celebration, Education and Involvement**

A key focus for us has been the creation of a shared calendar of events and celebrations we can shout about across public services in Bury. The Inclusion Working Group, alongside the Cohesion Sub-Group of our Community Safety Partnership agreed that our communications should not just be about telling people about inclusion and specific inclusion related celebrations but, importantly, should be an opportunity to celebrate what's happening in Bury and what's important to Bury people, educate people to understand more about equality and feel confident to speak and act around inclusion; and encourage people to get involved. Our shared inclusion calendar includes over 70 celebrations where we're taking this approach.



### **Focusing our efforts**

As part of our Inclusion Strategy, we've used data and worked in co-operation to tell us what matters most. As such, in 2021/22 we focused on race and delivered a year-long programme

of engagement with communities experiencing racial inequality across the borough. Learning from this has supported the development of a new, inclusive, Council website and laid the foundations of a Race Steering group with our VCSE partners. This year our focus has been on disability and much of the work here has been about pathways into employment. We've also worked hard to celebrate disability inclusion in the workforce and have made a particular effort to educate our colleagues about hidden disabilities.

### **Mainstreaming Inclusion**

In Bury, we know inclusion is about everything we do, not the responsibility of one person or team. Here's just a few day-to-day examples which demonstrates our commitment:

- Bury has one of the largest Jewish populations outside of London. We actively advocate the knowledge that there isn't a homogenous "Jewish community". We have worked with Jewel around employment and support and engagement with the Haredi community by setting up a Haredi community Jewish liaison officer position. In the last month we have worked together with the Jewish communities, faith leaders and local schools to create a Holocaust Memorial event.
- Our Work & Skills and ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages) team have built relationships with local businesses to work together on employing people with neurodiversities and disabilities.
- Co-design is at the core of our approach in both Adults and Children's social care. We have commissioned co-production networks for Autism, Learning Disabilities, Mental Health and Older People. 140 Bury people with Learning Disabilities and 200 Bury young autistic adults are involved in our networks in various ways.

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