The Pioneer Housing Group

Annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report

2023-2024

**Introduction**

The Pioneer Group’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy sets out to ensure that:

* That our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion informs all our operating processes
* That our services are accessible and available to all
* That our workforce and leadership mirror the diversity of our City
* That as an anchor organisation we are supporting inclusive communities across our core neighbourhoods

Our commitment comprises:

* Delivering the best service possible to all our customers
* Providing the best opportunities and working environment for our staff
* Removing barriers that prevent communities from flourishing.

This means understanding individual circumstances, choices and needs, and tackling all forms of discrimination.

We have adopted a set of service principles to underpin our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy. These were originally promoted by the Chartered Institute of Housing, and they are set out below:

* **Understand our customers** – better understand who our customers are and their needs, so that we are able to provide appropriate tailored services which are accessible to all.
* **Promote accessibility** – services should be sensitive to differing needs and create a level playing field and access for all.
* **Value diversity** – recognise, and proactively promote, the benefits that people with diverse backgrounds can bring to the communities in which we work.
* **Promote engagement and involvement** – ensure all customers have the opportunity to get involved in developing and shaping the services we offer.
* **Promote inclusive communities** – everyone should feel that they belong in the community and we will foster good community relations.
* **Provide clear and meaningful information** – ensure that we provide clear and meaningful information about our services in ways that are accessible and meet the needs of all the customers in the communities in which we work
* **Partnership working** – commit to supporting and promoting our equality and diversity aims with all our partners and maintain a clear expectation that all our contractors and suppliers should demonstrate this also.

These goals will be achieved over a five year period (2021-2025) and progress updates will be published in September of each year.

Our Actions for 2021-23

We are committed to many actions between 2021-23 as part of our ambitions for Equality, Diversity and Inclusions. As part of this the Pioneer Group will:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Leadership and Governance** | **Update on progress 2023-24** |
| Ensure that appropriate management and operational support is in place. | The EDI work of the group is supported by a cross-departmental EDI Forum |
| Ensure arrangements are in place to facilitate the work of the Diversity Advisory Group | The Diversity Advisory Group is supported by the People Team |
| Build an appropriate schedule of EDI activities into the marketing and communications work plan | The Communications Manager is developing this as part of the forward plan for communications activity |
| Explore signing up to other initiatives e.g adoption of Race Code, participation in Birmingham Race Impact Group | We are active participants in the Birmingham Race Impact Group |
| **Employees** | **Update on progress** |
| Understand our city demographics for benchmarking purposes | This is complete. The Pioneer Group uses the latest Census data. |
| Draw upon experience of relevant sector benchmarks | We participate in regional HDN Forum and National NHF Forum to enable us to draw on best practice |
| Develop approach towards talent spotting and mentoring | Our Management Development and Aspiring Leaders Programmes are the foundation of our talent spotting approach |
| **Service Delivery** | **Update on progress** |
| Ensure that we understand our community demographics | We have used 2021 Census data to understand the demographics of our communities |
| Develop framework to monitor customer satisfaction for EDI indicators, to include: customer satisfaction with CVCH and Compass services; monitoring of complaints; feedback through resident engagement | The approach to monitoring feedback is ongoing. We collect some demographic data as part of our surveys and we are looking at how to develop this further in relation to complaints and other customer touchpoints |
| **Engagement with communities** | **Update on progress** |
| Draw up programme of celebratory events that can be rolled out internally and with our communities | We recently held an event for staff to celebrate and understand the meaning of Eid. We have reached out to the Castle Vale Muslim Society. |
| Ensure that Strategy is well publicised in accessible format for tenants & residents, staff and stakeholders | The strategy is available on our website and now that we have a communications team in place we will look at how to further publicise |
| Ensure our publications celebrate differences and embrace all communities | This has always been part of our approach and we are currently commissioning new photography which will reinforce this approach |

Our Actions for 2024-2025

Over the last 3 years The Pioneer Group has developed an active Diversity Advisory Group (DAG), where colleagues, suppliers and Board Members who are enthusiastic about EDI come together to promote and champion EDI as well as supporting and developing a campaign of EDI events for colleagues to maintain awareness across the company.

With the development of the new Corporate Plan underway, the opportunity has been taken to review the existing EDI strategy and Action Plan, with a view to revising and updating this whilst creating alignment with our future objectives.

Initial discussions with DAG have identified the following challenges from the last three years:

* It has been difficult to create continuity and consistency following events such as training, lunch and learns and celebrations
* Whilst we have made progress in filling the gaps in our EDI data, we have not made as much progress as we would like in this area and this has had an impact/ limited the actions we have been able to take

With this in mind it has been agreed with DAG that the new EDI strategy will focus on 5 key themes, with high quality data and insight being an overarching driver to inform this work:

**DATA**

**Health**

**Neurodiversity**

**BAME**

**LGBTQIA+**

**Gender**

Colleagues have aligned themselves with these themes and will collaborate to identify the challenges and opportunities in these areas and how this can be addressed within the new EDI Strategy and policy.

The EDI strategy and policy will be published in Q4 2024/ 2025

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Data

The below provides a comparison between Pioneer Group staff, Board Members and the profile of the Birmingham City. It also shows the movement in categories from one year to the next.

As show below The Pioneer Group has seen a reduction in younger Board Members over the past year due to three resignations. These have all been positive leavers with Members leaving for career advancement or changes in personal circumstances. The Pioneer Group is working with the Housing Diversity Network to recruit trainees to improve the Group’s diversity on its Boards (Fig 1)

**Fig 1**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Age** | **Board Members 2022-23** | **Board Members**  **2023-24** | **Birmingham City** | **Movement** |
| 16-24 | 0% | 0% | 15.69% \* |  |
| 24-40 | 29% | 25% | 21.66% |  |
| 41-65 | 67% | 62.5% | 28.58% |  |
| 65+ | 4% | 12.5% | 13.15% |  |

\* 2021 Census data. Age band 15-24

The Pioneer Group has seen an increase in younger colleagues over the past year with a decline in numbers of older staff members. This is linked to the Group’s turnover (Fig 2)

**Fig 2**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Age** | **Staff**  **2022-23** | **Staff**  **2023-24** | **Birmingham City** | **Movement** |
| 16-24 | 6% | 7.2% | 15.69% \* |  |
| 24-40 | 36% | 36.8% | 21.66% |  |
| 41-65 | 56% | 55.2% | 28.58% |  |
| 65+ | 2% | 0.8% | 13.15% |  |

The number of male Board Members has increased over the course of the past year. This has been due to recruitment with an increasing number of male applicants. The Pioneer Group is working with the Housing Diversity Network to recruit trainees to improve the Group’s diversity on its Boards (Fig 3)

**Fig 3**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Gender** | **Board Members**  **2022-23** | **Board Members**  **2023-24** | **Birmingham City** | **Movement** |
| Male | 52% | 54% | 49% |  |
| Female | 48% | 46% | 51% |  |

There has been a reduction in female staff over the course of the past year due to the recruitment within the Group. The Group is still reflective of the wider Birmingham City EDI profile in line with its Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy (Fig 4)

The Group is still committed to its Aspiring Leaders programme which is a 6 month internal training programme, focusing on the Talent Management and Succession Planning within the Corporate Plan and People and OD Strategy. Delegates are identified as potential future leaders at The Pioneer Group or are very new to management and are invited to join where our Head of People and OD leads the training sessions. Modules within the programme include 'Managing and Inspiring People', 'New duties and Responsibilities', 'Collaborative Working' and 'Self Reflection and Learning'. The intention is to provide delegates with the knowledge to aid them in their day to day working to self improve and climb the ladder when the opportunity arises.

**Fig 4**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Gender** | **Staff**  **2022-23** | **Staff**  **2023-24** | **Birmingham City** | **Movement** |
| Male | 40% | 40.8% | 49% |  |
| Female | 60% | 59.2% | 51% |  |

The diversity within the Group’s governance structure has improved and is now more reflective of the wider Birmingham City ethnicity programme. This is due to the Group’s approach to recruitment and ensuring that we are reaching as wide and diverse range of applicants as possible (Fig 5).

**Fig 5**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ethnicity** | **Board Members**  **2022-23** | **Board Members**  **2023-24** | **Birmingham City** | **Movement** |
| White: British | 81% | 79.17% | 53% |  |
| White: Irish | 0 | 4.16% | 2% |  |
| White: Other | 0 | 0% | 3% |  |
| Mixed | 0 | 0% | 4% |  |
| Asian/Asian British: Indian | 0 | 4.16% | 6% |  |
| Asian/Asian British: Pakistani | 0 | 0% | 14% |  |
| Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi | 0 | 0% | 3% |  |
| Asian/Asian British: Other | 5% | 0% |  |  |
| Black/Black British: Caribbean | 5% | 4.16% | 4% |  |
| Black/Black British: African | 9% | 8.33% | 3% |  |
| Black/British: other | 0% | 0% |  |  |
| Chinese/Other: Chinese | 0.00% | 0% | 1% |  |
| Other | 0 | 0% | 7% |  |
| Prefer not to Say | 0% | 0% |  |  |
| Not known | 0 | 0% |  |  |

\* 2011 Census

The Pioneer Group has recruited and retained a diverse workforce which is reflective of the wider Birmingham City demographics (Fig 6).

**Fig 6**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ethnicity** | **Staff**  **2022-23** | **Staff**  **2023-24** | **Birmingham City** | **Movement** |
| White: British | 47% | 51.2% | 53% |  |
| White: Irish | 3% | 3.2% | 2% |  |
| White: Other | 2% | 1.6% | 3% |  |
| Mixed | 3% | 2.4% | 4% |  |
| Asian/Asian British: Indian | 8% | 8.8% | 6% |  |
| Asian/Asian British: Pakistani | 5% | 4% | 14% |  |
| Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi | 2% | 0.8% | 3% |  |
| Asian/Asian British: Other | 1% | 1.6% |  |  |
| Black/Black British: Caribbean | 4% | 2.4% | 4% |  |
| Black/Black British: African | 2% | 2.4% | 3% |  |
| Black/British: other | 0 | 0% |  |  |
| Chinese/Other: Chinese | 0 | 0% | 1% |  |
| Other | 1% | 0.8% | 7% |  |
| Prefer not to Say | 1% | 0.8% |  |  |
| Not known | 20% | 20% |  |  |

The Pioneer Group’s governance structure currently has no Members with a declared disability. The Group is committed to being a diverse organisation and ensure that its Board and Committees are accessible to all (Fig 7).

**Fig 7**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Disability** | **Board Members**  **2022-23** | **Board Members 2023-24** | **Birmingham City** | **Movement** |
| Yes | 0% | 0% | - |  |
| No | 100% | 100% | - |  |
| Not Known | N/A | N/A | - |  |
| Prefer not to Say | N/A | N/A | - |  |

The Group has a diverse workforce with 5.6% of staff stating that they have a disability which is an increase of 1.6% on last year. The Group strives to ensure that its workplaces are accessible to support staff, customers and visitors (Fig 8)

**Fig 8**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Disability** | **Staff**  **2022-23** | **Staff**  **2023-24** | **Birmingham City** | **Movement** |
| Yes | 4% | 5.6% | - |  |
| No | 57% | 56.8% | - |  |
| Not Known | 39% | 37.6% | - |  |
| Prefer not to Say | 0% | 0% | - |  |

The Group’s governance structure is varied and diverse as show below (Fig 9).

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Religion** | **Board Members**  **2022-23** | **Board Members**  **2023-24** | **Birmingham City** | **Movement** |
| Christianity | 29% | 29.16% | 59% |  |
| Buddhism | 0 | 0% | 0.4% |  |
| Hinduism | 5% | 4.16% | 2% |  |
| Judaism | 0 | 0% | 0.2% |  |
| Muslim (Islam) | 0% | 0% | 21% |  |
| Sikhism | 0% | 0% | 3% |  |
| None | 43% | 50% | 19% |  |
| Prefer not to say | 23% | 16.66% | - |  |
| Not Known | 0 | 0% | - |  |
| Other | N/A | N/A | 0% |  |

Below shows the breakdown of staff religious beliefs over the past two years (Fig 10). Whilst we have made progress in filling the gaps in our EDI data, we have not made as much progress as we would like in this area and this has had an impact/ limited the actions we have been able to take and this will be a focus of the Group’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for 2024-2027.

**Fig 10**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Religion** | **Staff**  **2022-23** | **Staff**  **2023-24** | **Birmingham City** | **Movement** |
| Christianity | 29% | 32% | 59% |  |
| Buddhism | 1% | 0% | 0.4% |  |
| Hinduism | 1% | 1.6% | 2% |  |
| Judaism | 0 | 0% | 0.2% |  |
| Muslim (Islam) | 9% | 8% | 21% |  |
| Sikhism | 3% | 4.8% | 3% |  |
| None | 24% | 23.2% | 19% |  |
| Prefer not to say | 2% | 2.4% | - |  |
| Not Known | 27% | 24.8% | - |  |
| Other | 2% | 3.2% | 0% |  |

The below table (Fig 11) shows a breakdown of the governance structure’s sexuality. The Group has seen an increase in Board Members “prefer not to say” their sexuality and is considering ways to support and understand why Board Members do not want to provide this information.

**Fig 11**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sexuality** | **Board Members**  **2022-23** | **Board Members**  **2023-24** | **Birmingham City** | **Movement** |
| Gay Women/man | 0% | 0% | 1% |  |
| Heterosexual/Straight | 62% | 58.33% | 94.8% |  |
| Bisexual | 0% | 0% | 1.% |  |
| Other | 0% | 0% | 1% |  |
| Prefer not to say | 38% | 41.66% | 3% |  |
| Not Known | N/A | N/A | - |  |

Whilst the number of staff stating “prefer not to say” has decreased the number of “not known data” has increased (Fig 12). The Group is looking at ways to encourage staff to provide this data as part of the updated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy that will be published in 2025

**Fig 12**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sexuality** | **Staff**  **2022-23** | **Staff**  **2023-24** | **Birmingham City** | **Movement** |
| Gay Women/man | 1% | 0.8% | 1% |  |
| Heterosexual/Straight | 67% | 70.4% | 94.8% |  |
| Bisexual | 1% | 0.8% | 1.% |  |
| Other | 0% | 0% | 1% |  |
| Prefer not to say | 31% | 2.4% | 3% |  |
| Not Known |  | 25.6% | - |  |