EQUALITY ANALYSIS (EA)

POLICY/PROPOSAL:	New approach to marking and celebrating community cohesion and inclusion events
DEPARTMENT:	Partnerships, Housing and Resident Services
TEAM:	Change and Customer Insight
LEAD OFFICER:	Tom Pickup, Policy and Performance Manager
DATE:	11.03.25

NB: Please ensure you have read the accompanying EA guidance and instructions in full.

SECTION A – INITIAL SCREENING

1. Please provide a description of the policy, proposal, change or initiative, and a summary its objectives and the intended results.

In August 2023, the council initiated a review of its approach to community cohesion and inclusion events. Community cohesion and inclusion events are those centred around culture, identity, religion and faith. The core challenges around the current approach are centred clarity and consistency – we lack a clearly defined approach that reflects the demography, needs and expectations of our residents, communities, Members and staff. Our current approach often causes confusion for those stakeholders, and we feel its right to establish a new approach that empowers our communities, provides a quality offer for our communities and works with our communities and partners.

The council's current approach was agreed by Cabinet in 2011. Key components of this approach included ceasing the delivery of most events, particularly those that are faith-based, and focus on delivering a single 'catch all' event that is organised with local communities. In recent years the council has not been following this approach, in recent years we have been delivering faith-based and have not been organising an annual 'catch all' event. That said, the council feels the current approach is outdated and that it is right that we establish change to reflect how much the global, national and local context has changed since 2011. Additionally, the council's current financial context and available resource (staff and finance) makes it challenging to meet the demand that our stakeholders have articulated around the council's recent approach and offer – namely, we have been unable to deliver the quantity of events that are being requested.

Using this context, the review aimed to achieve the following outcomes:
- Establish what community cohesion and inclusion events the organisation commits to marking and celebrating annually based on demand, appetite and resource. This includes, understanding how the existing council capacity can deliver quality over quantity.

- Establish a definition of what constitutes the council 'supporting' community cohesion and inclusion events that are led by our partners and communities.
- Establish a clear distinction around council events (internal) and those for the community (external).

The new policy is comprised of the following components:

1. The council adopts an overarching 'Enabler Approach' to community cohesion and inclusion events. In practice this means the council commits to leading a smaller number of high-quality community cohesion and inclusion events and focuses on empowering and supporting communities to lead the events that matter to them. This approach will best allow the organisation to reflect and balance: available resource, Brent's diversity and expectation of residents, staff and Members.

2. 'Tiers' of support that define the support the council offers partners and the community for community cohesion and inclusion events.

3. A minimum community cohesion and inclusion events offer. This offer outlines the events the organisation commits to organising every year. This is not an extensive list of all the community cohesion and inclusion events that the council may organise every year, this is just the list of events the council guarantees it will organise every year.

4. Religious and faith events will not be included in the council's core community cohesion and inclusion events offer (i.e. the minimum community cohesion and inclusion events offer). Council-led external facing religious or faith events will be limited except for services that have an educational function, such as Libraries, Culture and Heritage.

5. Our staff networks will no longer independently organise external facing events, they must work with a service when organising any external facing events.

6. The council will only lighting up the Civic Centre in exceptional circumstances, such as national or global catastrophes or celebrations.

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2. Who may be affected by this policy or proposal?

Everyone may be affected. This is about recognising and celebrating Brent's diverse communities and the scope of community cohesion and inclusion events is extremely wide (i.e. events centred around culture, identity, religion and faith).

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3. Is there relevance to equality and the council's public sector equality duty? Please explain why. If your answer is no, you must still provide an explanation.

Yes, community cohesion and inclusion events meet all three aims of the public sector equality as the purpose of the events includes, but isn't limited to:
- Educating people about the history of different communities and groups

- Challenging stereotypes and discrimination
- Supporting different protected characteristics to thrive via support, advice, celebration, role models etc.
- Supporting community cohesion
- Celebrating achievements, success and the identity of different groups

4. Please indicate with an "X" the potential impact of the policy or proposal on groups with each protected characteristic. Carefully consider if the proposal will impact on people in different ways as a result of their characteristics.

Characteristic	Impact Positive	Impact Neutral/None	Impact Negative
Age	X	X	
Sex	X	X	
Race	X	X	
Disability	X	X	
Sexual orientation	X	X	
Gender reassignment	X	X	
Religion or belief	x	X	
Pregnancy or maternity	X	X	
Marriage	X	X	

5. Please complete **each row** of the checklist with an "X".

Screening Checklist

	YES	NO
Have you established that the policy or proposal *is* relevant to the council's public sector equality duty?	X	
Does the policy or proposal relate to an area with known inequalities?	X	
Would the policy or proposal change or remove services used by vulnerable groups of people?	X	
Has the potential for negative or positive equality impacts been identified with this policy or proposal?	X	

If you have answered YES to ANY of the above, then proceed to section B.
If you have answered NO to ALL of the above, then proceed straight to section D.

SECTION B – IMPACTS ANALYSIS

1. Outline what information and evidence have you gathered and considered for this analysis. If there is little, then explain your judgements in detail and your plans to validate them with evidence. If you have monitoring information available, include it here.

To help shape the proposed approach the working group compiled evidence, perspectives and feedback from the following groups:
- Staff directly involved in organising or supporting community cohesion and inclusion events, this includes all staff networks
- Brent Multi Faith Forum
- 10 London boroughs

Staff directly involved in organising or supporting community cohesion and inclusion events, this includes all staff networks
We surveyed services and teams across the organisation that are directly involved in organising community cohesion and inclusion events, both internal and external facing. The survey aimed to understand the different approaches across the organisation, including the process for organising events; the events that are organised; the volume of events organised; and the spending on events.

In summary, the feedback we received was varied. There is no consistency around approaches across teams and networks, including in the way teams define support, contributions or involvement in community cohesion and inclusion events or events more broadly e.g. variations in relation to whether subsidising or providing a space/room constitutes to supporting an event. Additionally, there is currently no corporate process or mechanism in place to monitor the breadth of events that are organised or supported across the organisation. Other key findings included:
- The survey received nine responses (having been circulated to 32 colleagues who work across a range of teams and networks), spanning across various teams and networks (Policy, Partnerships and Scrutiny; Libraries; Member Services; Community Engagement; Regeneration; Cultural Diversity Network; LGBTQ+ Network).
- The most significant driver for organising events is community appetite. Other drivers include: member appetite, officer appetite, data around community and staff needs, events that have been in the calendar historically.
- The list of community cohesion and inclusion events that are organised is extremely wide ranging including cultural, historical, religious and centred around other specific protected characteristics.
- Spending across teams and networks over the last 3 years is varied, some budget annually and others spend on an ad hoc basis.
- Most teams and networks monitor and evaluate their events but the process is not robust or consistent.

Brent Multi Faith Forum
We engaged with the Multi Faith Forum in November 2023 to share our provisional thinking about reviewing the council approach to marking and celebrating community cohesion and inclusion events and invited their perspectives. The Forum's expectation of the council is that we should not organise a large volume of events, rather we should focus on supporting the community and organisations to organise events that matter to them. This is grounded in the perspective that the council is a neutral organisation, therefore we should organise

events that are based on broad themes (e.g. themes of food or light) that bring people together and focus on providing good will and support to events led by the community.

Feedback from other London boroughs
An important component of the review was engaging with other boroughs to understand their approaches to community cohesion and inclusion events and lighting up the building. This included engaging with boroughs directly, in addition to holding a discussion at the London Equalities Network which comprises of EDI Leads across the boroughs.

The different approaches are outlined below, however it is clear that there is no universal approach and boroughs often have one or several of the following considerations at the heart of their approach – the needs and demands of their communities, available resource and political/officer ambition.

Borough	Community cohesion and inclusion events approach	Lighting up the building?
Barnet	Have an **agreed list of events** that are marked throughout the year. • The approach is centred around the national events and Barnet's demography and was agreed by Cabinet. • Have an internal events steering groups. • The community are encouraged to call for or organise other events outside of the calendar through the grants process.	Criteria in place – they agree a list annually.
Camden	No response received.	Ad hoc based on requests and options that are presented.
Ealing	• Internal events – EDI team, Comms and Staff Networks collaborate to organise events. • External events – the internal list of events is used as a basis for the external calendar. It has been supplemented through input from community groups. Events are organised by the council, staff networks and communities.	Criteria in place – options are agreed by the CEO and Leader.
Enfield	• Designated budget for Windrush, Black History Month and Pride events. • Staff networks only organise internal events. • There are no events organised around religion and faith.	No response received.

Hackney	• External facing events are organised by the Policy Team. • Internally, their Inclusion Champions are developing a staff led and informed calendar which includes the vast range of culture, religious and faith events/occasions that are marked and celebrated by staff.	No response received.
Hammersmith & Fulham	Have a written approach for internal events and the same principles are applied to external events.	Ad hoc.
Harrow	No response received.	No.
Hounslow	• EDI team work with the Staff Network Chairs and partners to organise: Black History Month, Pride, LGBTQ+ History Month, International Women's Day, International Day of Persons with Disabilities. • Other team also organise community cohesion and inclusion events to spread the workload.	No response received.
Kensington & Chelsea	No response received.	No.
Westminster	Have a calendar of events that cover both religious and cultural occasions.	Ad hoc.

2. For each "protected characteristic" provide details of all the potential or known impacts identified, both positive and negative, and explain how you have reached these conclusions based on the information and evidence listed above. Where appropriate state "not applicable".

AGE

Details of impacts identified	The new community cohesion and inclusion events approach will likely have positive impacts for this group. The approach provides greater clarity around the events the council will organise and includes a dedicated funding pot for community groups to organise the events that matter to them.

DISABILITY

Details of impacts identified	The new community cohesion and inclusion events approach will likely have positive impacts for this group. The approach provides greater clarity around the events the council will organise and includes a dedicated funding pot for community groups to organise the events that matter to them. The list of the events the council is committing to organising every year includes Disability Pride Month in July.

RACE

Details of impacts identified	The new community cohesion and inclusion events approach will likely have positive impacts for this group. The approach provides greater clarity around the events the council will organise and includes a dedicated funding pot for community groups to organise the events that matter to them. The list of the events the council is committing to organising every year includes several centred around race and ethnicity, including Refugee Week and Black History Month.

SEX

Details of impacts identified	The new community cohesion and inclusion events approach will likely have positive impacts for this group. The approach provides greater clarity around the events the council will organise and includes a dedicated funding pot for community groups to organise the events that matter to them.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Details of impacts identified	The new community cohesion and inclusion events approach will likely have positive impacts for this group. The approach provides greater clarity around the events the council will organise and includes a dedicated funding pot for community groups to organise the events that matter to them.

PREGANCY AND MATERNITY

Details of impacts identified	The new community cohesion and inclusion events approach will likely have positive impacts for this group. The approach provides greater clarity around the events the council will organise and includes a dedicated funding pot for community groups to organise the events that matter to them..

RELIGION OR BELIEF

Details of impacts identified	The new community cohesion and inclusion events approach will likely have positive impacts for this group. The approach provides greater clarity around the events the council will organise and includes a dedicated funding pot for community groups to organise the events that matter to them. The list of the events the council is committing to organising every year includes Islamophobia Awareness Month.

GENDER REASSIGNMENT

Details of impacts identified	The new community cohesion and inclusion events approach will likely have positive impacts for this group. The approach provides

	greater clarity around the events the council will organise and includes a dedicated funding pot for community groups to organise the events that matter to them.

MARRIAGE & CIVIL PARTNERSHIP

Details of impacts identified	The new community cohesion and inclusion events approach will likely have positive impacts for this group. The approach provides greater clarity around the events the council will organise and includes a dedicated funding pot for community groups to organise the events that matter to them.

3. Could any of the impacts you have identified be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010?
No.

4. Were the participants in any engagement initiatives representative of the people who will be affected by your proposal and is further engagement required?

> Engagement has captured insight from a range of stakeholder groups, including those with insights around our diverse communities. We have not engaged with every community group or protected characteristic as this would require extensive resource that is not available. Additionally, one of the drivers for this policy review is the uncertainty and confusion our communities have shared around our community cohesion and inclusion events approach – this approach seeks to respond to this concern.
>
> As part of implementation, we will socialise the new approach with key stakeholders. Any feedback received as part of this process will be considered.

5. Please detail any areas identified as requiring further data or detailed analysis.

> None.

6. If, following your action plan, negative impacts will or may remain, please explain how these can be justified?

> N/A

7. Outline how you will monitor the actual, ongoing impact of the policy or proposal?

We will establish an evaluation process for the events that are organised to monitor their impact and the funding awards through the grant funding pot. This will supplement any anecdotal feedback we receive about the new approach.

SECTION C - CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis above, please detail your overall conclusions. State if any mitigating actions are required to alleviate negative impacts, what these are and what the desired outcomes will be. If positive equality impacts have been identified, consider what actions you can take to enhance them. If you have decided to justify and continue with the policy despite negative equality impacts, provide your justification. If you are to stop the policy, explain why.

The policy has been developed to establish greater consistency and clarity around our approach to community cohesion and inclusion events. It also seeks to establish an approach that is aligned with the available resources – given the limited resources available there is little scope to enhance the positive impacts and new offer. Our approach focuses on leading on a smaller number of events to a high quality. An evaluation process will be developed to monitor the impact of the events and; therefore, inform our understanding around how successful the new approach is. Given that there are no negative implications there are no mitigating actions required.

SECTION D – RESULT

Please select one of the following options. Mark with an "X".

A	CONTINUE WITH THE POLICY/PROPOSAL UNCHANGED	X
B	JUSTIFY AND CONTINUE THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	
C	CHANGE / ADJUST THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	
D	STOP OR ABANDON THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	

SECTION E - ACTION PLAN

This will help you monitor the steps you have identified to reduce the negative impacts (or increase the positive); monitor actual or ongoing impacts; plan reviews and any further engagement or analysis required.

Action	Expected outcome	Officer	Completion Date

Establish an evaluation process for the events that are organised corporately to monitoring impact and popularity	We will best understand the impact of respective events and then adapt accordingly.	Tom Pickup	July 2025
Socialise the new approach with stakeholders	This will alert stakeholders, include Brent's communities, to the new approach. They will also learn about the new community-led community cohesion and inclusion events grant.	Tom Pickup	April – July 2025
Develop the community-led community cohesion and inclusion events grant, including a robust evaluation and monitoring process.	The new community cohesion and inclusion events grant will empower communities to organise events that matter to them. To ensure the outcomes are robust and there is a real community benefit an evaluation process will be established.	Tom Pickup	July 2025

SECTION F – SIGN OFF

Please ensure this section is signed and dated.

OFFICER:	Tom Pickup, Policy and Performance Manager
REVIEWING OFFICER: *** the manager with oversight of the project***	Jon Cartwright, Head of Change and Customer Insight
HEAD OF SERVICE / Operational Director:	Jon Cartwright, Head of Change and Customer Insight