

Equality Action Plan 2017 - 2020

Introduction

A fairer society benefits everyone, and the Parole Board has a major role to play in promoting equality and human rights and tackling discrimination. Central to all work on equalities is ensuring that our workforce is aware of their duties and are equipped to fulfil them and that diversity is promoted to prisoners, their families and the victims. We have listened to and considered the views of our key partners and stakeholders and we have a willingness to challenge and establish new ways of thinking and consider new options.

The Parole Board has a statutory duty to decide whether those serving certain custodial sentences are manageable in the community and to protect the public. We therefore realise that our work brings together the various aspects of equality, diversity and human rights that fall within the work that we do.

This Equality Action Plan sets out the steps that the Parole Board plans to take to improve data and address issues when they arise. The plan is a living document and we expect it to evolve as we identify potential areas for action. We will therefore continue to develop our understanding of how the backgrounds of different individuals can affect an offender's pathway through the criminal justice system and use this to inform our practice and business development.

Our overarching aim is that all people that come into contact with the Parole Board can expect to be treated with equality and fairness regardless of their gender identity, race, age, religious belief, disability or sexual orientation.

Mr Nick Hardwick
Chair

Mr Martin Jones
Chief Executive

Our Priorities

Parole processes that are fair, accessible and responsive

- To ensure that the processes we use in considering parole cases meet our public sector equality duty

Achieving a more representative Parole Board

- A workforce that is diverse at all levels and that uses the benefits of diversity to improve how we work

Promoting an inclusive culture

- Continuous improvement of our workforce's understanding of equality and diversity

Parole processes that are fair, accessible and responsive

Understand the protected characteristics of the prison population using research and data

- Summarise data and share with members and staff

Analyse and publish the outcomes of parole processes, by protected characteristics

- Create quarterly reporting processes that provide analysis of outcomes and protected characteristics

Ensure that all Parole Board published information is accessible to all

- Review current published information to ensure that it is accessible
- Consider accessibility needs when drafting information for publication

Conduct Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) on all policies and processes

- Develop, pilot and approve an EIA process for the Parole Board
- Implement EIA processes prioritising the areas that present most risk

Achieving a more representative Parole Board

Ensure that staff recruitment, appraisal and promotion is fair and transparent

- Identify barriers that may limit staff members' advancement into senior levels within the Parole Board

Increase the diversity of the Parole Board membership

- Recruit from the widest possible pool of talented candidates in our diverse society
- Publish anonymised data of the protected characteristics of our membership

Promoting an inclusive culture

Ensure our workforce is aware of Equality and Diversity issues, with particular emphasis on how this impacts on parole processes

- Improve and continuously monitor training and development of our workforce to promote good practice

To promote equality and diversity considerations across the Parole Board

- Appoint Equality and Diversity Champions across the Parole Board to promote equality and diversity considerations