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### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy – Progress Review January 2021

Objective 1: INCLUDE – Listen and involve all voices					
1a We will promote inclusive opportunities for two-way conversations					
Key Actions	Target Date	Expected Outcome	Data Source and Evaluation methodology	Lead responsibility	Progress – Jan 21
1. Develop our network of equality champions both internal and external to the council, as advocates and promoters of equality and inclusion	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunities for inclusive two-way conversations grow</li> <li>Policies and strategies are co-created</li> <li>Staff Groups represented at the EDI Board</li> </ul>	HR to provide number of equality champions (40 in 2020) Stakeholder list of external equality champions to be developed	Policy and Change  Individual network group members	<p><b><u>Partially achieved</u></b></p> <p>Equality champions network in place. The network requires re-energising following the pandemic.</p> <p>Staff network updates a standing agenda item on the EDI Board.</p> <p>Meeting has taken place with the Police to learn from their Top 50 inclusive employer recognition. Meeting set up with the Fire Authority equality lead.</p> <p>Mens network “The Circle” established.</p> <p>Young employers’ network being established.</p>
2. Commit to sharing and presenting information in appropriate and accessible formats.	Ongoing	Documentation and other published material is suitable for the audiences which are accessing it.		Web team & EDI officer to monitor publications online and check all documentation is accessibility checked.	<p><b><u>Partially achieved</u></b></p> <p>This area will be reviewed as part of the Consultation and Engagement group, which will start its work in March 2022.</p>
3. Work collaboratively with voluntary, community and	Ongoing	Collaborative activities and communications are developed and promoted where appropriate.	Agreed list of awareness days and events will be used.	Communities team. Communications team. Policy and Change	<p><b><u>Partially achieved</u></b></p> <p>An asset-based approach is taken in relation to developing services with the Voluntary,</p>

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<p>faith organisations to share key messages and opportunities for engagement.</p>				<p>department.</p>	<p>Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector. Experts by experience are sought and a suite of resources used to develop services with our communities to empower them to serve themselves.</p>
<p><b>1b We will seek to listen in order to understand</b></p>					
<p>1. Expand our opportunities and methods of engaging with residents, partners and stakeholders to ensure that we are proactive and inclusive.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>To ensure that all residents can engage with the council. To support digital inclusion. To understand barriers preventing effective engagement and working to remove them.</p>	<p>Consultation and Engagement data will be used to evidence an increase in the involvement of underrepresented groups.</p>	<p>Communities Team Policy and Change Department</p>	<p><b><u>Not yet achieved</u></b></p> <p>A cross council Consultation and Engagement group has been established and will work together from March 2022.</p> <p>The Customer Experience and Digital strategies have been launched, which include EDI objectives.</p> <p>A Live Well for Longer strategy is being developed, which has been coproduced with residents. The vision for the strategy is creating an equal partnership between residents and system leaders to ensure all services are designed and delivered in line with resident needs.</p>
<p>2. Know our audience and communities through robust and up to date stakeholder mapping and management</p>	<p>July 2022</p>	<p>The veteran community will have up to date information on where local support is available</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Support mental health</li> <li>-Safe place for veterans</li> <li>-Volunteering opportunities</li> <li>-Bring the community together</li> <li>-Create a charity network</li> <li>-Public awareness around</li> </ul>	<p>The Communities team will capture both quantitative and qualitative feedback directly from people attending events.</p>	<p>Communities team</p>	<p><b><u>Not yet achieved</u></b></p> <p>Following analysis of a recent CVS study, a need was identified for local services for veterans. The team liaised with veteran charities and are working towards establishing a veterans hub in Cheshire East. Suitable premises have been identified in Crewe. This facility will offer services to the veteran community.</p> <p>We are working with 2 charities to bring the</p>

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		<p>our veteran community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Services working together</li> <li>-Family fun days</li> <li>-Veterans into employment</li> <li>-Training opportunities</li> </ul>			<p>community together for 2022-Armed Forces Day at Queens Park in Crewe for a 2-day large event. Help For Heroes and Crewe Military vehicle charity will be working in partnership engaging with the veteran community over this event offering support and entertainment to families.</p> <p>Stakeholder mapping to be completed and maintained for all community groups promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion.</p>
<p>3. Use and consider information including data and intelligence to inform our thinking and action</p>	<p>June 2022.</p>	<p>Develop an EDI scorecard to monitor performance and diversity across services. The scorecard will ensure;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organisation understands the effects of employment policy and practice on its workforce.</li> <li>• The organisation has sufficient information about staff to inform robust equality analysis.</li> <li>• The workforce profile is updated regularly.</li> <li>• Data is looked at organisationally and service by service.</li> <li>• It is possible to analyse data by all of the protected characteristics.</li> </ul>	<p>Unit 4 ERP system</p>	<p>Business Intelligence team</p>	<p><b><u>Partially achieved</u></b></p> <p>An initial staff EDI profile has been developed. Further work needs to be undertaken to gather staff information in relation to age (or DOB to allow calculation), gender reassignment and pregnant (not maternity). These areas are not currently included in HR reporting.</p> <p>Further work requires progressing in relation to understanding our communities and understanding how we may best tackle inequalities.</p>

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		<p>The organisation has gathered and published information and data on the profile of its communities and the extent of inequality and disadvantage. Plans are in place to collect, share and use equality information with partners.</p> <p>A comprehensive set of information about local communities/protected characteristics needs and outcomes is regularly updated and published and used to identify priorities for the local area.</p>			
<b>Objective 2: INSPIRE – Celebrate and promote our diversity and the positive opportunity it brings</b>					
<b>2a. We will promote local events and activities that seek to reduce isolation, raise awareness and encourage participation</b>					
<p>1. Develop a communication and engagement plan to identify key events and activities that the Council will promote and support each year</p>	<p>Annual calendar to be agreed.</p>	<p>Residents and staff receive communications around awareness days and associated activities. Improved understanding and awareness. Diversity and inclusivity promoted in the workplace.</p>	<p>Approved version of the Awareness Days list.</p> <p>Events plans co-created for agreed events.</p>	<p>Policy and Change Department. Equality Champions</p>	<p><b><u>Achieved</u></b></p> <p>Draft 2022 list produced. List to be shared with Directorate boards, staff networks, champions and communications team to agree a final list.</p>

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<p>2. Support and promote community action and cooperation across our partnerships to improve cohesion</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>There is an increase in the involvement of underrepresented groups.</p> <p>There are a range of innovative approaches to involving communities and arrangements are made to meet specific or individual needs.</p> <p>Vulnerable people/ communities are participating including the hardest to reach in the community.</p> <p>There is evidence that mainstream engagement mechanisms are increasingly involving previously under-represented groups.</p> <p>Communities are encouraged or supported to influence or make decisions.</p>	<p>Explore how the Census 2021 data can be used within the council to inform action and design – updated profiles and increased.</p>	<p>Communities team Business Intelligence team</p>	<p><b><u>Not yet achieved</u></b></p> <p>The communities team have established leads, together with work programmes, for a range of “hard to reach” groups.</p> <p>Cheshire East Council will participate in the Cheshire Equality Leads Forum to work effectively with partners.</p>
<p>3. Support our staff through Peer Networks and events</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Continued development of the Peer Networks and their role.</p> <p>Ensure that policies and strategies are co-created with the Peer Networks.</p>	<p>Evidence that publications reflect our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. To be audited within the annual equality report.</p>	<p>Policy and Change department.</p>	<p><b><u>Not yet achieved</u></b></p> <p>Policy development framework being reviewed and revised arrangements will be implemented during 2022/23.</p>

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2b. We will proactively take action to ensure our workforce is diverse and representative of the communities we serve					
1. Apply fair recruitment and selection procedures	Ongoing	Ensure that applicants can see their lived experiences amongst others in the workforce	Equality profiles of applicants and new starters	Workforce development Organisational development	<b><u>Partially achieved</u></b>  The Workforce Strategy 2021-2025 was approved in November 2021 and sets out how the Council will develop the workforce to support Corporate Plan priorities. This includes a key priority around "Inclusive Workforce" and actions to ensure that everyone has a voice.
2. Make reasonable adjustments to ensure the work environment and culture meets the needs of all our staff	To be in place for any return to office	Register for the Sunflower lanyard recognition scheme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff with hidden disabilities will feel more comfortable at work</li> <li>• All staff to be aware of what the scheme is and how to help</li> <li>• Specialist training for customer facing staff</li> </ul> Ensure that all staff have the correct equipment they need to enable them to do their jobs. Improvements have been made to the working environment. Reasonable Adjustments are provided in a timely fashion consistently across the organisation		HR Differently Abled Network Equality Officer Workforce development Organisational development	<b><u>Partially achieved</u></b>  The EDI Board have approved a pilot scheme to provide sunflower lanyards to those with hidden disabilities. The pilot scheme will be supported by awareness training for all staff, with specialist training for those in customer facing roles.  The organisation has a policy for Reasonable Adjustments for staff and Members and managers are trained to implement it.

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		Differently abled network to review reasonable adjustments guidance to inform policy development.			
3. Monitor and review employment practice and our policies and procedures that support them	Disability confident application to be submitted by 30/06/21  Every PDR cycle	Achieve Disability Confident Employer (level 1) status by 2023 and Level 2 by 2025  Ensure EDI is built into the PDR process to encourage staff to take responsibility for their EDI knowledge and training.	Application via link.	HR Differently Abled Network  Organisational development	<b><u>Not yet achieved</u></b>  The shared HR service across Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester has “Disability Confident” status. Cheshire East council is seeking this status in its own right to send a positive message of support for employees and potential employees with disabilities. This action requires some dedicated support to progress.  OD wellbeing initiatives are promoted every week in the internal e-newsletter “team voice” with variety of activities, information and links along with a dedicated web pages for all staff to access.  OD run the Managers Share and Support sessions and Time to Listen and Chat (TLC) calls twice a week.  OD have supported International Men’s and International Women’s days, incorporating activities into our Wellbeing months.  Learning Lounge offers 2 mandatory eLearning modules to support EDI strategy; Equality in the Workplace and Dignity at Work.  <u>What’s planned:</u> In the new year the upgrade to learning lounge will provide managers with a dashboard, where

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					<p>they can see who in their teams have completed training. Managers can then take ownership to encourage staff to complete the mandatory training and set this as an action on their PDR as required.</p> <p>Managers and staff are to discuss and comment on their wellbeing during the PDR conversation, to ensure support and action planning is embedded.</p> <p>The mandatory courses are being reviewed and it is being considered to set these to annually completion, where staff will be sent reminders when they need to re certify.</p>
<b>Objective 3: INTEGRATE – Deliver and promote accessible services for all</b>					
<b>3a. We will ensure that we consider, communicate and consult with all people regardless of their protected characteristics when developing or changing our services</b>					
1. Undertake Equality Impact Assessments across all development and change activities including services we buy and commission	Ongoing	Polices, strategies and decisions being shaped and informed by equality impact assessments.	Increased number of EIAs.	All staff – with support from Policy and Change department	<p><b><u>Partially achieved</u></b></p> <p>EIAs are a standard part of committee reports and accompany all HLBCs which accompany the MTFS.</p> <p>EIA and associated process will be reviewed during 2022/23.</p>
2. Provide training and guidance to ensure equality impact assessments are fully	2022/23	Create support package for Members to provide advice and guidance on EDI matters to ensure that members have a greater understanding and can	Training outcomes.	Member EDI Champion, supported by Democratic Services. Workforce	<p><b><u>Partially achieved</u></b></p> <p>Member EDI champion has written to all Members to encourage them to complete the e-learning package.</p>



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understood		challenge inequality appropriately.		Development. Policy and Change.	Additional Member training will be progressed alongside officer training. This will occur following the review of EIAs.
3. Publish all equality impact assessments to provide transparency, assurance and information on our decision making	Ongoing	<p>There is senior level commitment to using and understanding equality analysis/ impact assessment to inform planning and decision making.</p> <p>The organisation's assessments are accessible, robust and meaningful. There is evidence that Members routinely take account of equality analysis/ impact assessment when making decisions.</p> <p>Decisions around budget cuts and savings have taken account of cumulative impact.</p> <p>The findings, recommendations and conclusions are shared effectively to inform decisions and planning.</p> <p>Mitigating actions are identified where appropriate</p>	Details to be included in Annual Equality Report.	Policy and Change department.	<p><b>Achieved</b> – ongoing action.</p> <p>Equality Impact Assessments are published on the council's website.</p>
<b>3b. We will ensure that all services we commission meet their obligations under the Equality Act</b>					
1. Engage and work with our local	June 2023	The community and voluntary sector say that they are treated as equal		Commissioning Team TOGETHER	<p><b>Partially achieved</b></p> <p>Have achieved in People's services:</p>

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<p>communities to co-produce and co design our local service offer and the design and delivery of major projects such as town centre regeneration schemes and improvements to local neighbourhoods</p>		<p>partners by the Council.</p> <p>The organisation achieves considerable social value from its contracts</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioning handbook</li> <li>• Standard specification</li> <li>• Performance Management framework</li> <li>• Social Value policy</li> </ul> <p>This work now needs to be consistently replicated across the council.</p>
<p>2. Require our suppliers to provide adequate and timely equality monitoring information</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Local procurement is positively influencing the local economy</p> <p>There is evidence of providers meeting the organisations equality objectives.</p> <p>Providers understand and can articulate a commitment to equality.</p>	<p>Contract Management data</p>	<p>Procurement</p>	<p><b><u>Partially achieved</u></b></p> <p>Tenders – discretionary exclusion from any tender if found to be in breach of any labour laws. This is backed up with a contractual clause “perform its obligations under the Contract in accordance with all applicable equality Law and the Council’s equality and diversity policy as provided to the Supplier from time to time”. We did have an example of this last year and we didn’t award the contract to the supplier.</p> <p>Annual social value survey “When appraising and selecting potential suppliers, do you have processes in place to check the ethical practice of potential suppliers and their supply chains” - 35% of suppliers who responded confirmed that extensive checks were completed on their suppliers and supply chains New contract management system will include policies to be held centrally. This will replace the</p>

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					annual social value survey and make social value benefits business as usual and part of contract monitoring.
3. Ensure that any venue we use or event we promote does not discriminate on the basis of an individual's protected characteristic					<b><u>Not yet achieved</u></b>  This action requires progressing.
<b>Objective 4: INFORM – Empower people to respectfully challenge discriminatory and poor behaviour</b>					
<b>4a We will take a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, taking positive and immediate action where possible</b>					
1. Continue to reinforce and promote the Council's values and behaviours to promote a positive and inclusive workplace culture.		Improved quality and availability of EDI training for Learning Lounge. Ensure all protected characteristics are adequately covered by training available.  All staff to take responsibility for their own learning to develop awareness and understanding of different peoples' lived experiences.	Reports on uptake to be produced and inform annual report.  Increase number of EDI related training opportunities.	Staff Networks Workforce development	<b><u>Partially achieved</u></b>  <u>What's been achieved:</u> Several courses on learning lounge provide training on the protected characteristics: Equality in the workplace and Equality Act 2010.  Basic Autism Awareness course, Accessible Information, is available for staff to complete.  Learning Lounge offers a good selection of e-learning and delivered courses around equality, diversity, inclusion and raising their own awareness; Acceptable Behaviour and Language Including Unconscious Bias (8 sessions delivered to 120 people), Helping Disabled Customers (155 completed since April 19), Supporting Carers in the Workplace (48 completed since April 19), Time to Change, Equality & Diversity, Mental Health Awareness,

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					<p>HIV Awareness, Introduction to Bipolar, Customer Service and Pre retirement training. All courses are promoted to staff with many courses fully booked and staff waitlisted, which shows a real commitment to developing their knowledge and understanding.</p> <p><u>What's planned:</u> Cultural competency e learning module is in development.</p> <p>In early 2022 staff will be able to create their own learning plan on learning lounge and use this to support the PDR conversations.</p> <p>In Jan 22 a conversation to set out the E&amp;D training plan for 2022-2024 will be discussed, so its likely further courses will be commission or developed to support the focus areas.</p>
<p>2. Provide access to clear and robust HR policies and procedures to support officers and managers when challenging poor or unacceptable behaviour</p>	Ongoing	<p>Policies to be reviewed regularly to ensure that they are up to date. Reviews to be conducted in collaboration with staff networks where relevant.</p> <p>Senior leaders in the organisation have stated their commitment to a diverse workforce and have made clear what is expected from staff when delivering services to the community.</p>	Training provided via Learning Lounge	HR	<p><b><u>Achieved</u></b></p> <p>Agile and flexible working policy updated.</p>

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4b. We will work in partnership to keep people safe and connected					
1. Contribute and collaborate with partners and stakeholders to tackle hate crime and promote hate crime reporting	Ongoing	To support the aim for no criminal offences to be committed against a person or property that is motivated by an offender's hatred of someone because of their: race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, ethnic origins, religion, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation or disability.	Hate Crimes reported through the "True Vision" website.	Communities team	<b>Achieved</b> – ongoing action
2. Take targeted action to educate, inform and challenge the stereotypes faced by our marginalised communities (e.g., migrants, Gypsy, Roma and Travellers)	By 2024  GRT Group to be launched in March 2022.	The wider community will benefit from the knowledge from this group and the positive relationship with the council.  To provide sustainable jobs and enhance skills within individuals whilst supporting our hard-to-reach communities.	Evaluation of actions to be considered.	Communities team	<b>Partially achieved</b>  It is recognised that education is vital in tackling discrimination, so we have partnered with a number of schools across the borough to hold workshops aimed at all ages.  The Communities team are working with community partners to identify and upskill residents (many of whom from a BAME / migrant community) to facilitate the workshops and provide a unique perspective.  A meeting has been set up with the GRT community to establish their aims and support with using external sources to support the setup of a constituted group. A launch date is due in March 2022 for the new GRT group.  In August 2021 we supported the Afghan wraparound support in a nearby hotel where we welcomed 23 families. 5 families were rehomed into Cheshire East houses, from this we identified an individual who suited a position we

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					had advertised working within the communities team. This person is now employed by the Council as a translator working with at the hotel supporting the Afghan project.
3. Promote and signpost to networks that provide advice and support to anyone impacted or experiencing discriminatory behaviour or action	Ongoing	Services are co-produced with service users wherever possible and service users can influence changes	Promotion through digital and non-digital channels.	Communities team EDI Board	<b>Achieved</b> - ongoing  We have a network of Connected Community Centres across the borough which provide a place for local people to connect and gather information. Surrounding the Connected Community Centres is an infrastructure of partnership agencies who convene on a regular basis and use local intelligence to identify gaps in service and work in collaboration to meet need identified. The Neighbourhood Partnerships are an essential communications channel to disseminate information to the heart of the community.

### Objective 5: IMPACT – Support and deliver meaningful change

#### 5a. We will be open and transparent in publishing the progress of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion objectives

1. Publish an annual report on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at Cheshire East in the public domain	Annually	To have an oversight of Council performance in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion.	All EDI data	Policy and Change department.	<b><u>Not yet achieved</u></b>  To be completed by June 2022.
2. Publish the Gender Pay Gap report in the public domain	Annually	There is evidence that the organisation is actively working on reducing its Gender Pay Gap.			<b><u>Partially achieved</u></b>  2020/21 report published.  Report in relation to 2021/22 will be presented to

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					the April 2022 EDI Board <b><u>Not yet achieved</u></b>
3. Ensure that evaluations for each event are available for publication.					This action is outstanding and requires progression.
<b>Objective 6 – Continuously improving equality, diversity and inclusion (additional actions identified to embed the objectives of the EDI strategy)</b>					
1. Review and refresh EDI board	Dec 2021	EDI board has a clear role in delivering the EDI Strategy.  EDI Board representation to reflect its delivery role.  EDI strategy implemented with proper buy in and commitment at all levels.	Demonstrated progress on delivering work plan priorities  Increased attendance and participation at EDI board meetings	EDI Officer and EDI Board chair	<b><u>Partially achieved</u></b>  Progress delayed slightly due to staffing changes. New Director in post from end of November 21. Revised target date now April 22.
2. Review and refresh Directorate level EDI Boards	Dec 2021	Clear links achieved between directorates and EDI board.	Meetings happen quarterly and feeding back to EDI board	EDI Officer and EDI Board chair	<b><u>Partially achieved</u></b>  Some directorate groups have not met due to covid response commitments. The directorate group for Corporate Services requires refreshing now that new staff are in post.  The EDI Board receives regular updates from directorates and EDI Board members attend directorate meetings.
3. Ensure appropriate access to CLT for staff network group as required.	Ongoing	Members of the network groups can request to meet with CLT to discuss their experiences and ideas for improvement.	Attendance at meetings is representative of staff network membership	Staff network members	<b><u>Not yet achieved</u></b>  As several CLT members are new to the organisation, they will be invited to attend the staff network groups as part of their induction. It may be appropriate to have a CLT lead member for each of the staff network groups.