

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy – Progress Review

•	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			
Develop our network of equality champions both internal and external to the council, as advocates and promoters of equality and inclusion	Ongoing	Opportunities for inclusive two-way conversations grow Policies and strategies are cocreated Staff Groups represented at the EDI Board	HR to provide number of equality champions Stakeholder list of external equality champions to be developed	Policy and Change Individual network group members	AchievedMembership of staff network groups has reached just under 200 officers, which is an increase over the period of the strategy.The Equality champions network has been refreshed and have agreed a terms of reference and annual training plan.Staff network updates are a standing agenda item on the EDI Board.Young employers' and veterans' networks are now established.External equality contacts have been collated and are now included within the equality impact assessment toolkit.			



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.	Partially achievedThe Web team continues to check documentsthat they are asked to upload and applicationsthat they are asked to link to, for accessibility andwhether we think it is usable.More staff are aware of how they can checkaccessibility for themselves in Office products.
Work collaboratively with voluntary, community and faith organisations to share key messages and opportunities for engagement.	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	AchievedCoproduction of services with the involvement of universal groups and groups with protected characteristics is being undertaken. The Communities team engages with VCFSE providers on matters of interest with minority groups such as asylum seekers, refugees, migrant populations.Consultation and Engagement toolkit supports and enables increased involvement and collaboration across services and community groups.Awareness days are planned in advance and staff network groups support those days which are relevant to each group.Engaging with many VCSFE groups on the development of Family Hubs – including having a representative from Wishing Well on the comms and engagement group. We worked with a range of groups to highlight Voter ID



	requirements, this included Age UK, a number of organisations and groups via the communities team, including groups representing Gypsy, Roma and Travellers, trans and non-binary people, and, via our housing team, people experiencing homelessness. We have maintained links with various faith and cultural groups to promote public health campaigns, including COVID and more recently childhood vaccinations. We have also shared messages on WarmPlaCEs and cost of living support with a range of community groups – many of which also supported and shared information about Homes for Ukraine - we engaged various stakeholders including TPCs
	information about Homes for Ukraine - we



1b We will seek to lister	n in order to	understand			
Expand our opportunities and	Ongoing	To ensure that all residents can engage with the council.	Consultation and Engagement data	Communities Team	Achieved
methods of engaging with residents, partners and stakeholders to ensure that we are proactive and inclusive.		To support digital inclusion. To understand barriers preventing effective engagement and working to remove them.	will be used to evidence an increase in the involvement of underrepresented groups.	Policy and Change	 Following the creation of a cross council group, a consultation and engagement toolkit has been drafted and now informs consultation and engagement development. This has been made available on the Centranet. An equality impact assessment toolkit has also been made available to support improved equalities assessment of change. The Customer Experience strategy is being redesigned and will include EDI objectives.
					Regular meetings with CHALC are being held to ensure that material is widely distributed.
Know our audience and communities through robust and up to date stakeholder mapping and management	July 2022	The veteran community will have up to date information on where local support is available: Support mental health Safe place for veterans Volunteering opportunities - Bring the community together Create a charity network Public awareness around our veteran community -	The Communities team will capture both quantitative and qualitative feedback directly from people attending events.	Communities team	Partially achievedFollowing 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.Lots of work around veterans including the Council working towards the MoD Armed Forces
		Services working together Family fun days			Gold Award which will require various policy



		Veterans into employment Training opportunities			changes. 2023-Armed Forces Day now planned and being advertised. Stakeholder mapping to be completed and maintained for all community groups promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion.
Use and consider information including data and intelligence to inform our thinking and action	Ongoing	Develop an EDI scorecard to monitor performance and diversity across services. The scorecard will ensure: - The organisation understands the effects of employment policy and practice on its workforce. The organisation has sufficient information about staff to inform robust equality analysis. The workforce profile is updated regularly. Data is looked at organisationally and service by service.	Unit 4 ERP system	Business Intelligence team	Partially achievedAn 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.Further work requires progressing in relation to understanding our communities and understanding how we may best tackle inequalities.



	t is possible to analyse data
b	by all of the protected
c	haracteristics. The
0	organisation has gathered
a	ind published information
a	ind data on the profile of its
	communities and the extent
0	of inequality and
	lisadvantage.
P	Plans are in place to collect,
	hare and use equality
	nformation with partners.
A	A comprehensive set of
	nformation about local
	communities/protected
	characteristics needs and
	butcomes is regularly
	ipdated and published and
	ised to identify priorities for
	he local area.
(I	



Objective 2: INSPIRE – Celebrate and promote our diversity and the positive opportunity it brings									
2a. We will promote loca	2a. We will promote local events and activities that seek to reduce isolation, raise awareness and encourage participation								
Develop a communication and engagement plan to	Annual calendar to be	Residents and staff receive communications around awareness days and	Approved version of the Awareness Days list.	Policy and Change Equality Champions	A 2023 list has been produced and has been				
identify key events and activities that the	agreed.	associated activities.	Events plans		shared with Directorate boards, staff networks, champions and communications team to agree a				
Council will promote and support each year.		Improved understanding and awareness.	agreed events.		final list and to take ownership of days which are relevant to each directorate and staff network.				
		Diversity and inclusivity promoted in the workplace.							
Support and promote community action and	Ongoing	There is an increase in the involvement of	Explore how the Census 2021 data	Communities team	Achieved				
cooperation across our partnerships to improve		underrepresented groups.	can be used within the council to	Business Intelligence team	The Communities team now have a bespoke team that work with minority groups. The				
cohesion		There are a range of innovative approaches to involving communities and arrangements are made to	inform action and design – updated profiles and increased.		Cohesion team primarily support migrant populations and veterans but this work is being expanded.				
		meet specific or individual needs.			Cheshire East Council will participate in the Cheshire Equality Leads Forum to work effectively with partners.				
		Vulnerable people/ communities are participating including the hardest to reach in the			Ward profiles have been made available and shared to provide current data on communities across the borough.				
		community.			A stakeholder database is in initial design stages, with the goal of creating a repository of groups				



		There is evidence that mainstream engagement mechanisms are increasingly involving previously underrepresented groups.			who represent seldom heard or vulnerable to enable participation in decision making activities.
		Communities are encouraged or supported to influence or make decisions.			
Support our staff through Peer Networks and events	Ongoing	Continued development of the Peer Networks and their role. Ensure that policies and strategies are co-created with the Peer Networks.	Evidence that publications reflect our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. To be audited within the annual equality report.	Policy and Change	Partially achieved Staff network groups now play a critical role in the assessment and review of policies and are engaged with in advance of any consultation. This early engagement ensures that any polices are co-produced and consider equalities at the outset.
					Further revised arrangements will be implemented during 2023/24.



Apply fair recruitment	Ongoing	Ensure that applicants can	Equality profiles of	Workforce	Partially achieved
and selection		see their lived experiences	applicants and new	development	
procedures		amongst others in the	starters		The organisation has revised its previous
		workforce		Organisational	guaranteed interview scheme to the newer
				development	disability confident scheme standard. As part of
					this more detailed guidance on the application of
					the scheme has been produced to ensure it is
					applied correctly and consistently.
					Equality and Diversity data can now be collected
					via Unit4. Recent communication has been
					undertaken to encourage completion of this data
					to provide the Council with an opportunity to
					understand the profile of the workforce.
					The Workforce Strategy is being implemented,
					which includes a key priority around "Inclusive
					Workforce" and actions to ensure that everyone
					has a voice. A Gender Pay Gap Action Plan is in
					place. EDI e-learning training is mandatory for all
					staff. New staff feedback groups are active on a
					regular basis.
					The Council is progressing Disability Confident
					accreditation and therefore an audit of
					recruitment and selection of candidates with
					disabilities is underway.



Make reasonable	To be in	Register for the Sunflower		HR	Achieved
adjustments to ensure	place for	lanyard recognition			
the work environment	any return	scheme:		Differently Abled	The Sunflower lanyard scheme has been
and culture meets the	to office			Network	introduced and training is now available to
needs of all our staff		Staff with hidden			support the scheme via learning lounge.
		disabilities will feel more		Equality Officer	
		comfortable at work			The Council has registered as a member of the
			,	Workforce	Sunflower Lanyard recognition Scheme to
		All staff to be aware of		development	support people with hidden disabilities. The
		what the scheme is and			package purchased comes with posters and
		how to help		Organisational	training materials and is designed to support
				development	both staff and visitors in council premises. It will
		Specialist training for			be in place initially in libraries and customer
		customer facing staff			service centres, and a communications launch is
					planned for late 2022.
		Ensure that all staff have			The Differently Abled staff network group can
		the correct equipment			advise and support staff who may need
		they need to enable them			additional resources to work effectively. All staff
		to do their jobs.			are encouraged to speak with their managers.
		Improvements have been			The Differently Abled Group are reviewing
		made to the working			guidance for workplace adjustments.
		environment.			
					The Hidden disability staff network group meet
		Reasonable Adjustments			regularly and has a good level of membership.
		are provided in a timely			
		fashion consistently across			The group are now seeking accreditation to the
		the organisation.			Disability Confident Employer scheme.
		Differently abled network			HR have agreed to audit how many applicants
		to review reasonable			have completed a "disabled applicant pro forma"



		adjustments guidance to inform policy development.			 and to review if there is any available data on the success or otherwise of disabled applicants. When applicants are invited to interview, they are asked in the invite email to let the hiring manager know if they require any adjustments to help them attend the interview. This is dealt with locally by the hiring manager. HR have agreed to review any evidence from jobs advertised around the success rate of disabled candidates seeking and gaining promotion. HR are looking to provide human resource managers with specific Disability Confident training Feedback from the Differently abled network group has been incorporated into the reasonable adjustments policy. The organisation has a policy for Reasonable Adjustments for staff and Members and managers are trained to implement it.
Monitor and review employment practice and	Disability confident	Achieve Disability Confident	Application via link.	HR	Partially achieved
	application to	Employer (level 1) status		Differently Abled	Application for Disability Confident Employer
	be submitted by 30/06/21	by 2023 and Level 2 by 2025		Network	status is being progressed, with level 1 achieved.
					Level 2 evidence is being gathered and an application for level 2 will be made once this has been completed and checked.



Every PDR cycle	Ensure EDI is built into the PDR process to encourage staff to take responsibility for their EDI knowledge and training.	Organisational development	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.
			Learning Lounge provides managers with a dashboard, where 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.
			Managers and staff are to discuss and comment on their wellbeing during the PDR conversation, to ensure support and action planning is embedded.
			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.

•		d promote accessible services for communicate and consult with		of their protected cha	racteristics when developing or changing our
services	we consider,	communicate and consult with	i all people regardless		
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	AchievedThe EIA template and guidance has been updated and is now accompanied by an Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit.A learning lounge training module has been developed and will now provide further guidance around how to complete an assessment.Further training is also being looked at to provide Equality Champions with a specific session on content and approach to completing Equality Impact Assessments.
Provide training and guidance to ensure equality impact assessments are fully understood	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 challenge inequality appropriately.	Training outcomes.	Member EDI Champion, supported by Democratic Services. Workforce Development. Policy and Change.	Partially achieved Members induction programme has been developed, which includes the 2 EDI mandatory modules. Equality Impact assessment training is being developed.



					Equality champions will be provided with equality impact assessment training to support their knowledge and to enable shared learning within the Council. Equality Impact Assessment training is being refined and will be available on Learning Lounge.
Publish all equality impact assessments to provide transparency, assurance and information on our decision making	Ongoing	There is senior level commitment to using and understanding equality analysis/ impact assessment to inform planning and decision making. 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. Decisions around budget cuts and savings have taken account of cumulative impact.	Details to be included in Annual Equality Report.	Policy and Change	Achieved – ongoing action. Equality Impact Assessments are published on the council's website.
		The findings, recommendations and conclusions are shared			



effectively to inform decisions and planning.		
Mitigating actions are identified where appropriate		

3b. We will ensure that a	3b. We will ensure that all services we commission meet their obligations under the Equality Act						
Engage and	June 2023	The community and		Commissioning	Achieved		
work with our local		voluntary sector say that		Team			
communities to co-		they are treated as equal			The following has been achieved in People's		
produce and co design		partners by the Council.		TOGETHER	services:		
our local service offer							
and the design and		The organisation achieves			Commissioning handbook		
delivery of major		considerable social value			Standard specification		
projects such as town		from Its contracts			Performance Management framework		
centre regeneration					Social Value policy		
schemes and							
improvements					This work is still embedded, next steps will be		
to local neighbourhoods					demonstrating the impact this has, and		
					monitoring participation.		
Require our suppliers to	Ongoing	Local procurement is	Contract	Procurement	Partially achieved		
provide adequate and		positively influencing the	Management data				
timely equality		local economy			Equality is a clause within all council contracts		
monitoring information					and standard terms and conditions available of		
		There is evidence of			CE website.		
		providers meeting the					
		organisations equality			Tenders – discretionary exclusion from any		
		objectives.			tender if found to be in breach of any labour		
					laws.		



	Providers understand and		Equality questions asked at supplier selection
	can articulate a		stage.
	commitment to equality.		
			Annual social value survey – questions asked
			about suppliers apprising their supply chain.
			New contract management system includes
			policies to be held centrally against the supplier
			and performance indicators added.
Ensure that any venue		All	Not yet achieved
we use or event we			
promote does not			This action requires progressing
discriminate on the			
basis of an individual's			
protected characteristic			



Objective 4: INFORM – Empow	ver people to respectfully challenge di	scriminatory and poo	r behaviour	
4a We will take a zero-tolerand	ce approach to discrimination, taking	positive and immedia	te action where pos	sible
				SiblePartially achievedSeveral 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 eLearning and delivered courses around equality, diversity, inclusion and raising their own awareness: Course Completions Updated completions 1st Jan - 12th Dec 2023 Dignity at work 23 - 2449 completions, Equality in the workplace - 2916 completions, Equality Act - 121 completions, Acceptable Behaviour and Language Including Unconscious Bias - 4 seminars 47 attended, Helping Disabled Customers - 21 completions, Supporting Carers
				in the Workplace Introduction - 25 completions, Supporting Carers in the Workplace Line
				managers - 20 completions, Transgender Training - 38 completions, Unconscious bias - 123 completions, Mental Health Awareness - 2 seminars, 23 attended, Mental Health Awareness for managers - 2 seminars 25 attended, Mental Health Awareness - 205



		completions, HIV Awareness - 10 completions, Introduction to Bipolar - 0 completions, Pre- retirement training - 1 seminar 17 attended. Additional Courses added: Neurodiversity in the workplace - 111 completions, Acceptable Behaviour and Language (Including Unconscious Bias) for managers - 3 seminars 23 attended, Equality Impact Assessments - 14 completions, Practical
		Equalities - 1 seminar 9 attended, Zero Suicide Prevention - 6 completions, Sunflower Training Videos - 26 completions. A neuro-diversity e-learning module is also now available on Learning Lounge.
		<u>What's planned:</u> All staff are now required to complete the Equality in the Workplace module on an annual basis and Dignity at Work will also be set as annual completion.
		Equality impact assessment training has been developed December 2023 and will be rolled out in the New Year.

Provide access to clear	Ongoing	Policies to be reviewed	Training provided	HR	Achieved
and robust HR policies		regularly to ensure that they	via Learning		
and procedures to		are up to date. Reviews to	Lounge		The following policies and procedures are
support officers and		be conducted in			currently under review, and will be launched in
managers when					late 2024:



challenging poor or	collaboration with staff	
unacceptable behaviour	networks where relevant.	Dignity at Work Policy and Procedure
		Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
	Senior leaders in the	Grievance Policy and Procedure
	organisation have stated	
	their commitment to a	In addition, the Code of Conduct (Officers) is also
	diverse workforce and have	currently under review and the Equality in
	made clear what is expected	Employment Policy and Transitioning at Work
	from staff when delivering	Policy, both are due to be launched in 2024.
	services to the community.	Staff networks have been consulted on changes
		to the policies as part of the review process.
		The following mandatory e-Learning modules are
		available on the Learning Lounge to support the
		HR policies and procedures, and are updated in
		line with the policies:
		·
		 Dignity at Work (all staff)
		Disciplinary Procedure (managers)
		Equality in the Workplace (all staff)
		Grievance Policy and Procedure
		(managers)
		There are HR workshops for manager in respect
		of the Discipline, Grievance and Dignity at Work
		procedures.
		In addition, there are modules on Learning
		Lounge for
		Acceptable Behaviour and Language
		(including unconscious bias)
		Challenging Conversations/Conflict.



4b. We will work in parts	nership to ke	ep people safe and connected			
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	Achieved – ongoing action Connections have been established with housing been looking and developing a community tension monitoring report" which allows us to identify community tensions early and intervene. This includes Hate Crime statistics, this work is under development.
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	Partially achievedWe have supported 700 Ukrainians during2022/23 and have supported over 400 Afghansover the last two years.Our focus this year is how we can ensure wehave a VCFSE sector that can respond to"integration needs" including additional supportfor Asylum Seekers for things like immigrationsupport and advice. This also includes bespokeinterventions around health protection (vaccinehesitancy/TB screening etc).



Promote and signpost to networks	Ongoing	Services are co-produced with service users wherever	Promotion through digital and	Communities team	Achieved
that provide advice and support to anyone impacted or experiencing discriminatory behaviour or action		possible and service users can influence changes	nondigital channels.	EDI Board	We have a network of Connected Community place for local people to connect and gather information. We have plans in 2023/24 for these venues to become more culturally competent in terms of reaching out to various cohorts.

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					
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	Not yet achieved To be completed this year.
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.			Achieved The Gender Pay Gap report was published in line with the regulations: Gender Pay Gap Report (2022/2023) The Gender Pay Gap action plan is a regular agenda item at the Council EDI Board.



			The Gender Pay Gap Report (2023-2024) will be published on, or around, 31 March 2024. This will be shared with the EDI Board in [January] 2024.
Ensure that evaluations for each event are available for publication.	Annually		Partially Achieved An evaluation report has been completed for Crewe Pride 2022. Due to current economic conditions and remaining face-to-face meeting challenges, no other events have been undertaken by Cheshire East Council.

Objective 6 – Continuously improving equality, diversity and inclusion (additional actions identified to embed the objectives of the EDI strategy)						
Review and refresh EDI	2022/23	EDI board has a clear role in	Demonstrated	EDI Officer and EDI	Partially achieved	
board		delivering the EDI Strategy.	progress on	Board chair		
			delivering work		A new chair is now in place and the board has	
		EDI Board representation to	plan priorities		been refreshed. This refresh takes into account	
		reflect its delivery role.			the establishment of a new boards in each	
			Increased		directorate within the Council, with the new	
		EDI strategy implemented	attendance and		members being nominated from each	
		with proper buy in and	participation at EDI		directorate board.	
		commitment at all levels	board meetings			
					As there is no EDI officer yet in place, the	
					objective is only partially achieved.	



Review and refresh Directorate level EDI Boards	2022/23	Clear links achieved between directorates and EDI board.	Meetings happen quarterly and feeding back to EDI board	EDI Officer and EDI Board chair	Partially achievedEDI boards have been established in each directorate and they meet on a regular basis.Issues and communication feed into and out of the directorate boards into the Council EDI board.The EDI Board receives regular updates from directorates and EDI Board members attend directorate meetings.
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	Not yet achieved 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.