

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Action Plan Update

To: Communities, Social Mobility and Inclusion Committee

Meeting Date: 16 October 2025

From: Executive Director of Strategy and Partnerships

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: No

Executive Summary: The report provides an update on the progress of the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Action Plan

Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to:

Review the progress of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Action Plan.

Officer contact:

Name: Janet Atkin
Post: Service Director: HR Services
Email: Janet.Atkin@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

1. Creating a greener, fairer and more caring Cambridgeshire

- 1.1 The Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy is a key enabling strategy which helps the Council to achieve its vision and ambitions for Cambridgeshire to become greener, fairer, and more caring in the ways that are most suitable to the variety of people, and diverse communities it serves.

2. Background

- 2.1 The public sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) applies to public bodies and others carrying out public functions. It supports good decision-making by ensuring public bodies consider how different people will be affected by their activities, helping them to deliver policies and services which are efficient and effective; accessible to all; and which meet different people's needs.
- 2.2 The Equality Duty is supported by specific duties that are set out in regulations. These duties require public bodies to publish relevant and proportionate information demonstrating their compliance with the Equality Duty, and to set themselves specific, measurable equality objectives every four years. The Council's EDI Strategy, which is published on [the Council's website](#), outlines how the Council is working to ensure that it meets its statutory obligations in the Equality Act 2010 to the benefit of its employees, residents and service users.
- 2.3 The EDI Strategy (2023-2027) was approved by Full Council on 18 July 2023, following a recommendation from the Communities, Social Mobility and Inclusion Committee on 6 July 2023 and the Strategy and Resources Committee on 11 July 2023. The supporting EDI Strategy Action Plan was approved by the Communities, Social Mobility and Inclusion Committee on 11 January 2024.
- 2.2 Action plan progress is monitored by the EDI Leadership Forum, which is chaired by the Executive Director of Strategy and Partnerships. The forum meets quarterly and reports to the Communities, Social Mobility and Inclusion Committee biannually. Action Plan progress is also included in the annual workforce update to the Staffing and Appeals Committee.

3 Main Issues

- 3.1 The strategy and action plan are split into three themes:
 - a) Our workforce: Foster an inclusive, supportive and safe working environment that attracts and retains diverse people who feel valued, respected, and empowered.
 - b) Our communities: Further understand and work with diverse communities across Cambridgeshire, developing local solutions which address the needs of communities.
 - c) Our services: Ensure people who use the Council's services and residents have good quality public services that meet the diverse needs of communities.

3.2 Every action has a responsible person or team, start and end dates, and a success measure. Each action has been RAG-rated to provide an update on progress. The action plan spans four years. As a result, there are some actions that are not due to start until 2026 and these have been identified in blue (planned, not started).

3.3 The progress of each action has been rated using the keys set out in Table 1.

Colour rating	Definition of colour rating
Red	Not started or behind schedule
Blue	Planned, not started
Amber	In progress
Green	Completed

Table 1 – RAG rating colour key

3.4 Table 2 (Workforce), Table 3 (Communities) and Table 4 (Services) show progress on each theme. The full action plan and progress is attached at Appendix 1. It is recognised that the action plan is focused primarily on Theme A (Workforce), which reflects the need to improve the Council’s processes and information for staff as a foundation for refreshing EDI in its service work.

Colour rating	Definition of colour rating	Number of actions	Change from last update
Red	Not started or behind schedule	0	0
Blue	Planned, not started	5	-10
Amber	In progress	29	+2
Green	Completed	22	+8
Total		56	

Table 2 – Workforce Actions

Colour rating	Definition of colour rating	Number of actions	Change from last update
Red	Not started or behind schedule	0	0
Blue	Planned, not started	0	0
Amber	In progress	7	-4
Green	Completed	6	+4
Total		13	

Table 3 – Communities Actions

Colour rating	Definition of colour rating	Number of actions	Change from last update
Red	Not started or behind schedule	0	0
Blue	Planned, not started	1	-2
Amber	In progress	10	+1 (new action added)
Green	Completed	5	+2
Total		16	

Table 4 – Services Actions

3.5 The status of each action is included in the full action plan attached at Appendix 1. A summary of key achievements to date is highlighted in Table 5 below. The action plan is an organic document, and many actions are ongoing throughout the year. The action plan responds to new data and evidence, such as the Council's employee survey.

Theme	Key achievements
Workforce	Launched reasonable adjustment eLearning in collaboration with Learning & Development colleagues. The Equality Act 2010 mandates that employers make reasonable adjustments to prevent disabled employees or applicants from experiencing a substantial disadvantage compared to their non-disabled counterparts.
	Launched a Respect at work disclosure tool to enable colleagues to report any form of unacceptable behaviour that they have witnessed or experienced by other colleagues, in the workplace, including any form of bullying, harassment, discrimination, hate and/or micro-aggressions.
	Neurodivergent peer support group launched.
	Funded the women of colour in leadership programme.
	Anti-racism Steering Group launched in 2024, an overarching organisation wide group. The group oversees our organisational approach to addressing racial inequities and implementing a strategic and targeted approach to advancing race equity. Actions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-racism webpages developed with support and resources. • Held listening sessions for global majority colleagues to understand their experiences in the workplace. • Supported the launch of a Global Majority peer support group. • Committed to the Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard (SC-WRES). The Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard (SC-WRES) is a program that identifies and addresses racial inequalities in the social care workforce. It is grounded in the legal framework of equality and non-discrimination, specifically the Equality Act 2010.

Theme	Key achievements
	<p>Introduced guaranteed interview scheme for care experienced applicants. We recognise Care Experience as a protected characteristic. Where a candidate has declared they are Care Experienced, and they meet the essential criteria for a role they are guaranteed an interview.</p>
	<p>Taking action to improve our diversity disclosure rates of employees. Diversity data helps us to understand the impact of our policies and practices on different groups, which is crucial for meeting the Public Sector Equalities Duties' requirements. To demonstrate compliance with the equality duty, we must publish the annual equality information report to understand whether we are providing equality and opportunity for all our employees and explore ways to improve data collection and data quality. For all actions in the action plan, an evidence-based approach is taken using data to identify issues and measure outcomes. This data also enables us to report our statutory pay gap information.</p> <p>Data change since November 2024: +10.83% for disability, +4.5% for ethnicity, +7.83% for nationality, +6.17% for religion and +5.24% for sexual orientation.</p>
	<p>Following feedback from colleagues that they are experiencing microaggressions in the workplace, we published a microaggression document to support colleagues to understand what they are and the impact of microaggressions. Microaggressions in the workplace, though often subtle and unintentional, can create a hostile environment and contribute to discrimination and harassment. While not always explicitly covered by employment law, repeated or severe microaggressions can fall under the umbrella of harassment, leading to legal claims. Employers have a responsibility to address these behaviours and create a more inclusive workplace.</p>
	<p>Achieved Disability Confident Level 3 Leader status in September 2025. The Disability Confident scheme aligns with the legal obligations outlined in the Equality Act 2010, which protects disabled individuals from discrimination and requires reasonable adjustments in the workplace.</p>
	<p>Launched neurodiversity at work awareness training with Learning & Development colleagues and the Neurodivergent Peer Support Group. Neurodiversity awareness training helps the organisation to understand their legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010, which requires them to make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees, including neurodivergent conditions. The training fosters a more inclusive workplace by educating employees about neurodiversity and its associated strengths and challenges, ultimately promoting a more supportive and collaborative environment.</p>
Communities	Cambridgeshire County Council awarded Council of Sanctuary status in March 2025.

Theme	Key achievements
	Libraries EDI action plan including programmes for Refugee Week.
	Traveller Health Team deliver weekly drop-ins and adult education courses through Cambridgeshire Skills.
	Awarding of seed-funding to develop new community-led services and activities by out 5 place-based teams in the Communities Service.
Services	Launched a new Equality Impact assessment online form, guidance and eLearning. Equality Impact Assessments are a way to ensure public bodies have met their legal obligations under the PSED.
	Worked in partnership with the Integrated Care System on EDI related activity.
	Developing a reasonable adjustment policy for customers, supporting officers to understand our legal requirements as provider of services. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies to take reasonable steps to make adjustments for disabled people to ensure they can access services and functions without being disadvantaged
	Trained Equality Impact Assessment Super Users to support colleagues to complete EqIAs.
	Continued to host a regional EDI Network with other local authorities and education providers.

Table 5 – Summary of Key Actions from the Action Plan

4. Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 As detailed in Paragraph 2.2 of the report, preparing and publishing the Council's equality objectives at least every four years is one of its specific requirements under the Equality Act 2010.

5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

- 5.1 The EDI Strategy demonstrates the Council's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion as an employer and service provider, as well as its compliance with the public sector Equality Duty. The role of the committee is to review and scrutinise the progress of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Action Plan.

6. Significant Implications

6.1 Finance Implications

There are no foreseeable implications in this category.

6.2 Legal Implications

There are no significant implications within this category. The action plan aligns to existing HR and legislative requirements, including the Equality Act 2010 and associated public sector equality duty.

6.3 Risk Implications

There are no foreseeable implications in this category.

6.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

The action plan champions equality, diversity and inclusion within the Council's existing workforce. No direct or adverse equality implications are expected. Equality Impact Assessments are being carried out for all projects and programmes of work.

7. Source Documents

7.1 [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy](#)

7.2 [Equality Act 2010](#)

7.3 [Agenda Item 6 \(a\) \(Items for determination from Strategy and Resources Committee - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy\)](#) – Full Council meeting on 18 July 2023

7.4 [Agenda Item 9 \(Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Action Plan\)](#) – Committee meeting on 11 January 2024