

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 2021/22 working towards our EQUALITY OBJECTIVES 2021 - 2025

Links to the Council Plan

- **CW3: Community Engagement** Strengthen local democracy by developing a culture of community engagement to enable greater involvement of residents, council tenants, communities and businesses in decisions on council services and priorities
- **CW5: Equality, diversity and inclusion:** Embed equality, diversity and inclusion as a priority across the Council and the District with targeted support for those who experience the most disadvantage in our communities

NB The sections highlighted have been rolled forward to the 2022/23 Action Plan

1. Communities: Listen and learn from our communities and use this to deliver services that work well for everyone

ACTIVITY	TIMESCALE	SERVICE AREA	OUTCOME	PROGRESS @ February 2022
1.1 a. Consult on the draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Objectives once approved by Council. b. Improve visibility of the equality data and intelligence held about the District's population and make it more widely available	October 2021	Policy & Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality data on the district is readily available, widely used by services and clearly presented on our website. • Infographics used to display the data on the Council's website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 8-week public consultation closed on 1st September and received 24 responses and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy was approved at Council in October 2021. An Easy Read version of the Policy is being produced. • The Council has an ongoing agreement with GCC to produce equality information at a district, ward and parish level. New district level data will be available from the National Census in late 2021 early 2022. • https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity/ • Infographics for each District Ward are published on the internal Hub for use by officers and members and on the SDC website.
1.2 Review what equality data is collected across key service areas to ensure appropriate data is available eg. to inform Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs).	Ongoing	Policy & Governance /Customer Services / HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services are using equality data to inform key decisions, policies and services delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the Equality & Diversity training provided to all staff in the summer of 2021, Equality Champions have been appointed across the organisation and have undertaken training with ENEI. • The complaints process has been amended to include equality monitoring by protected characteristics.

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equality impact assessments are used in decision making and are included in committee reports, but more work is needed to embed a consistency across the organisation. The Digital Platform delivered by the Council's Fit for the Future programme will, once embedded, provide the organisation with real time data and customer profiles to help to focus our services on the needs of our communities and those most in need.
<p>1.3 Establish how we can capture anecdotal and local knowledge more effectively to increase our understanding of the needs of our communities. Links to CW3 – 3.1</p>	Ongoing	Equality Working Group (EWG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mechanisms are in place to capture equality issues raised by Councillors. Service areas understand the needs of particular equality groups and use the findings to inform the development of Council services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning shared through Local Strategic Partnership; Parish & Town Council forums; Community Hubs; Neighbourhood Wardens. The Equality Working Group are working with members of the BAME community on initiatives to tackle racism and inequality across the district. For example, following a meeting with SAR improvements were made to our Complaints procedure to introduce equality monitoring and provide additional training to complaint handlers. The Digital Platform delivered by the Council's Fit for the Future programme will once embedded provide the organisation with real time data and customer profiles to help to focus our services on the needs of our communities and those most in need.
<p>1.4 Establish a Residents Panel to provide a structured forum for inclusive engagement. Links to CW3.1</p>	On hold –	Policy & Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council services are accessible to everyone and meet the specific needs of our communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A paper was previously prepared on the formation of a Citizens' Panel. This will now form part of the development of the Community Engagement Strategy as outlined in the Council Plan due for completion in 2023. The Health and Wellbeing team have compiled a list of community groups in the

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				<p>district and groups representing the protected characteristics across the district.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Community Health and Wellbeing Manager is now a member of the ED&I Working Group.
<p>1.5 Work with local partners and community groups to support and organise events to celebrate the different communities that live in the district</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Policy & Governance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The district's diverse communities feel recognised, included and engaged with. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council currently uses our website, social media platforms and intranet to publicise notable dates such as Black History Month and LGBTQ+ to promote equality and diversity. ENEI produces a notable dates calendar which the Equality Champions are promoting. In January 2021 we worked with Cheltenham BC to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day. Members of the ED&I WG work closely with Stroud Pride and SAR and regularly report back to the Working Group.
<p>1.6 Improve digital access to Council services. CW3.2</p>	<p>2021-22</p>	<p>Director of Transformation & Change and ICT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mission: To be ambitious, dynamic and have a positive impact on our communities. We will do this by placing communities at the heart of everything we do and by developing great services, especially for those that need us most. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fit for the Future (FFF) Board in place. Adrian Blick has been appointed as the Director of Transformation and Change and is leading the programme. A digital platform has been so that we can develop a customer portal for residents to self-serve at a time that suits them, which in turn frees up resources to give additional support to those who need more help, in line with the new Mission statement.
<p>1.7 Support wider community consultation and engagement with the Council: a. Establish a baseline of</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Community Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased engagement with our residents, tenants and service users. Our communities feel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultations are published on the Council's website: https://www.stroud.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/about-the-council/have-your-say/consultations Community Connected is a key Workstream in

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<p>current consultation.</p> <p>b. Produce accessible engagement and consultation guidelines for services.</p> <p>CW3.1</p>			listened to and able to participate.	<p>the Fit for the Future Programme and is working on establishing a baseline of current consultation with the aim to develop a Community Engagement and Consultation Strategy by 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The district's Talking Newspapers have been added to the Council's
1.8 Investigate the extent and impact of bullying on young people in our community	December 2021	Youth Service and Youth Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people are encouraged to speak out about bullying and policies and procedures to tackle bullying are improved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Youth Council have designed and conducted an in-depth survey of young people in the district, which received 873 responses and is being analysed by the young people themselves.

1. Communities: Specific to Black Lives Matter

ACTIVITY	TIMESCALE	SERVICE AREA	OUTCOME	PROGRESS TO DATE
1.9 Undertake a review of existing anti-racist and anti-discrimination policies and practices, including the training it provides to members and staff and to take action to strengthen these as required.	September 2021	HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective policies and procedures are in place to combat racism and all forms of discrimination. Awareness raising amongst elected members by using examples of lived experience from people from the local BAME community. 	<p>Following the May 2021 elections, the Member induction programme included anti-racism and anti-discrimination training, including local examples from the district's community. All staff have undertaken ED&I training and it is included in all new staff members' inductions</p>
1.10 Engage proactively with public and private sector service providers operating across Stroud	Ongoing	Chief Executive & Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage a joined-up approach to eliminating all forms of racism and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings have taken place with Gloucester City and Gloucestershire County Council to discuss joint working in relation to equality and

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<p>District, including care providers, education providers, police, and Town and Parish Councils to encourage a joined-up approach to eliminating all forms of racism and discrimination.</p>		All services	discrimination.	<p>diversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chief Executive and Leader are members of Stroud's Local Strategic Partnership comprising members from across the public, private and voluntary sectors. • Our CEO is the Equality Champion for SW Councils and HR Business Partner is part of the GCC working group preparing for Race Equality week in February. • Director of Public Health Annual report to Committee • We are actively involved with the County Hate Crime Group
<p>1.11 Take positive steps to educate ourselves and our communities about all forms of racism and discrimination. This should include giving greater visibility to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the continuous presence of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) residents in our District, who have contributed to our communities over at least 300 years. b) the probable role of past Stroud District residents in profiting from the slave trade and colonial exploitation. c) the positive role of past residents in opposing slavery and other forms of exploitation. 	Ongoing	Equality Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A better understanding of our diverse communities and improved community cohesion. • Increase in the percentage of residents responding positively to the Annual Budget Survey question 'To what extent do you agree or disagree that your local area is a place where people from different ethnic backgrounds get on well together'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council's BAME group celebrated Black History Month in October 2020 by sharing their experiences and celebrating their heroes on the Council's Intranet. • The Council's Annual Budget Survey 2020 asked residents to what extent they agree or disagree that their local area is a place where people from different ethnic backgrounds get on well together, 70% agreed (16% definitely agree and 54% tend to agree). However, just under 1 in 10 (9%) disagreed. • ENEI delivered equality and diversity training to all staff which included unconscious bias tests for Members and the Leadership & Management Team. • Specific questions on commemorations are part of the Street and Statues Review. The initial 8-week consultation had 1600 responses. • The Review Panel are due to publish their recommendations in April 2022. Their recommendations will identify areas of work

1. Communities: Specific to Black Lives Matter

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				<p>the Council can undertake to continue to educate about forms of racism and discrimination and the role Stroud district residents played in the slave trade. A number of their recommendations are likely to form part of next year's Action Plan.</p>
<p>1.12 Undertake a review and community consultation, in conjunction with Town and Parish Councils, of any street and building names, statues and architectural features that may be considered offensive; this is likely to include the Black Boy House and Black Boy Clock with its sculpture in Stroud Town.</p>	<p>March 2022</p>	<p>Equality Working Group/ Review Panel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where removal or name change is not considered necessary, there may be opportunities for using such examples for education purposes to make our past, with its positive and negative features, more visible and accessible to the current population through appropriate interpretation materials and educational visits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The process for the review of Black Boy Clock has been agreed by the Strategic & Leadership Teams and Group Leaders. EWG worked on the details of the process. • A report on the significance of the Statue has been drafted by the Specialist Conservation Officer. • The specification for the Review Panel included the recruitment of 3 Community Representatives who joined the Panel who will be overseeing the entire process. • The 8-week consultation had 1600 responses. • Further consultation is taking place with the individual owners of properties within Blackboy House. • The Review Panel are due to publish their recommendations from the review in April 2022, a number of recommendations may form part of next year's Action Plan.

2. Leadership and Organisational Commitment: Actively champion our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and tackle inequality together

ACTIVITY	TIMESCALE	SERVICE AREA	OUTCOME	PROGRESS TO DATE
2.1 Set objectives within the revised Equality and Diversity Policy and identify measures so that overall progress can be assessed annually.	August 2021	Policy & Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of the Council's equality and diversity objectives is monitored and reported in line with the public sector equality duty. Annual report to committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality Diversity & Inclusion Policy was approved by Council in October 2021 following public consultation. • Objectives and Action Plan to be reviewed annually by full Council. • Equality objectives are embedded in the Council Plan 2021-26 and monitored quarterly by committee.
2.2 Review the equality information published to ensure we are meeting the public sector equality duty.	November 2021	Policy & Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality information is used to improve service provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality information presented to the Equality Working Group, approved by Council and published on the Council's website.
2.3 Consider ('pay due regard' to) how we can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions. CW5.2	Ongoing	Policy & Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of social-economic impact is included as part of the Equality Impact Assessment process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of 'Rurality' forms part of the EIA process and will be extended to wider socio-economic impact. • EqIA training to be provided to all report writers • Stroud Indices of Deprivation:
2.3 Identify the current level of equality monitoring with a view to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Embed the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process across reports Review EIA guidance and training. Improve monitoring of compliance. Include consideration of Socio-economic disadvantage 	October 2021	Policy & Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All council decisions are made taking full account of the impact on all relevant protected characteristics and socio-economic disadvantage. • All EIAs are published on the Council's website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An EIA section has been incorporated into the Committee report template. • EIA template and guidance is available on the Hub and support is provided by the Policy and Performance Officer. • All EIA's will be published in a designated area on the Council's website

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2.4 Enhance the equality training element of the Member Development Programme	June 2021	Policy & Governance and Democratic Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members have an understanding of the Equality Act and a greater understanding of cultural differences within local communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mandatory Equality & Diversity training provided for all elected members, included Unconscious bias in June / July 2021. Regular training to be identified in the Member Development Programme
2.5 Organisational Development work – Shared values and behaviours	Ongoing	Ascend OD Consultants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a 'One Council' culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A series of 121s and staff workshops have been held and the findings have been presented to the 'Proud of Stroud' staff forum. The Council has developed and published its Values and Behaviours; work is underway in the Fit for the Future programme to ensure that this is embedded across the organisation
2.6 TIDE self-assessment tool	March - April 2021	HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To work with ENEI to review the Council and to gauge Equalities across the Council and what we need to do to improve. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with ENEI to monitor progress against the assessment tool. Improvement actions have been included in the Action Plan for the coming year.

3. Workforce: Build a diverse and engaged workforce, where everyone is respected

ACTIVITY	TIMESCALE	SERVICE AREA	OUTCOME	PROGRESS TO DATE
3.1 Recruitment training for staff involved, to cover the Equality Act, unconscious bias, positive action, genuine occupational requirement etc	May 2021	HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure we have an unbiased recruitment process where all staff involved understand their responsibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with ENEI to identify a suitable training package. Training was delivered to all Council staff on 'Inclusive Culture & the Role We Play' which included a segment on Unconscious bias Face to Face training was delivered to all Managers on 'Inclusive Culture & Leadership' and all managers have completed Unconscious

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				Bias e-learning.
3.2 To work with Zellis – Recruitment /Onboarding Module to analyse Equality data	April 2021	HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure we are attracting candidates from under-represented groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans to work with new system to implement Recruitment Module and in the future to develop a system to record the data. We now advertise all our Jobs on a Disability and BAME job boards
3.3 Work with service units to identify Positive Action Opportunities for the BAME group, Women into Management, People with Disabilities, LGBTQ+ and people in the Stroud Community who have lost their job due to COVID-19	Ongoing	HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To begin to address the imbalance from under-represented groups within the Council. To help the local economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centralisation of the Apprenticeship budget has allowed us to work across the Council and identify suitable opportunities. HR have presented to the Leadership and Management Team to promote the developed Apprenticeship scheme including plans to promote positive action opportunities.
3.4 Ensure that all interview questions have an Equalities Question for all candidates		HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asking the question at interviews reinforces to the candidate how important Equalities is in the Council. It is also an opportunity to gauge a candidate's understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working towards developing standard questions for each grade: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apprentice - Stroud 2 Stroud 3 - 4 Stroud 5 - 7 Stroud 8 - 9
3.5 Put in place a meaningful equality training provision for staff in order to improve the learning and development of equality and diversity. Cultural Awareness Training for key staff who work directly with the Community	November 2021	HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff have a better understanding of equalities and their responsibilities in the workplace and in service provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with ENEI to identify suitable course. Training has been delivered to all staff on 'Inclusive Culture & the Role We Play' which included a section on Unconscious bias. Training has been delivered to all our Managers on 'Inclusive Culture & Leadership' which included Unconscious bias e-learning course.
3.6 Identify development opportunities for BAME staff,	Ongoing	HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-addressing the imbalance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have successfully used the Levy funds to offer ILM Level 3 & 5 training for 6 female staff.

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women in management and staff with disabilities				
3.7 Work Experience placement	Ongoing	HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To give opportunities for under-represented groups to gain an introduction to work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with schools/colleges
3.8 Induction to ensure all staff participate in Equalities Training on commencing employment and to review the course to ensure it is fit for purpose	March 2021	HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure we have the best course available which covers all aspects of Equalities and is interactive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new starters complete a mandatory Equality & Diversity e-learning course. As part of all new starters' Induction programme, they will be required to attend Inclusive and Culture and the role we play training.
3.9 Recruit Equalities Champion for each Service Unit	January 2021	HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To have a key person in each service unit ensuring equalities is considered in all aspects of their service work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Managers to identify suitable champions for their service unit. During the course of the Inclusive Culture & the Role we play training courses some staff have expressed an interest in volunteering for being an Equalities Champion. HR and Ascend are currently working on the Organisational & Development Project and they are also keen to have Champions. A joined-up approach is to be developed. We have successfully recruited 10 EDI Champions who attended a development session with ENEI.