

CABINET – 10TH DECEMBER 2020

Report of the Strategic Director of Environmental & Corporate Services Lead Member: Councillor Leigh Harper-Davies

Part A

ITEM 8 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION (EDI) STRATEGY 2020-2024

Purpose of Report

To set out, following a period of public consultation, Charnwood's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy (2020-2024) for consideration and approval.

Recommendation

That the Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy (2020-2024) and associated Equality Action Plan (2020-2022), attached as an Annex, be approved.

Reason

To enable the Strategy, which seeks to improve how the organisation promotes equality in all services delivered by Charnwood Borough Council and in how it employs and manages staff, and to assist the Council in meeting its corporate objective to meet its customers' needs, to be approved following public consultation.

Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

The Council is required to produce an Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy to evidence how it is meeting its statutory duties regarding equality, diversity and inclusion. Various equality strategies, schemes and plans have previously been approved by Cabinet. This revised Strategy builds upon each of these and also strengthens the Council's existing approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. The current Strategy was approved by Cabinet in November 2016.

The legislative requirements within the Equality Act 2010 and associated Public Sector Equality Duty requires Charnwood Borough Council to revise its Priority Equality Objectives by 2020 (this duty must be completed every four years). This revised Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy is therefore necessary to reflect such changes.

The Strategy has been developed, in line with the Council's revised Corporate Strategy 2020-2024. It has been informed by the opinions of individuals and community groups which were captured via the Council's residents' survey that was conducted in 2019.

The Council's Corporate Strategy contains a framework for the delivery of services which focuses on areas that residents identified as priorities and those areas that the Council recognises as requiring additional support, with the intention of being beneficial for many of those within the community who need us the most. This Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy supports the aims and priorities set within the revised Corporate Plan 2020-2024 in order to attain the Council's aim of achieving fairness and respect for everyone in all that we do.

Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions and Scrutiny

The decision will come into effect immediately (subject to Call-in).

Report Implications

The following implications have been identified for this report.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report at this stage. All activities will be covered within existing budgets.

Risk Management

The risks associated with the decision Cabinet is asked to make and proposed actions to mitigate those risks are set out in the table below.

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Risk Management Actions Planned
Failure to assess the impact of our policies and to deliver fair and equitable services could result in the council facing a legal challenge and result in damage to its reputation.	Unlikely (2)	Significant (2)	Low (4)	Undertaking Equality Impact Assessments on policies and key decisions to analyse the impact on different equality groups, should reduce the risk of this occurring.

Equality and Diversity

An EIA has been prepared for this Strategy; however, the whole purpose is to ensure that we comply with our statutory duty to give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance Equality of Opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life and take account of disabled people's disabilities, even when that involves treating disabled people more favourably.

Key Decision: No

Background Papers: Cabinet, 17th November 2016, Equality Strategy 2016-2020

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Part B

Background

1. The current Equality Strategy was adopted by Cabinet in 2016. It was agreed that the current Equality Strategy would be reviewed after four years and refreshed to take account of the Council's legislative requirement to revise its Priority Equality Objectives by 2020, as prescribed in the Equality Act 2010 and associated Public Sector Equality Duty.
2. The Equality Act 2010 and the associated Public Sector Equality Duty require authorities to work towards a much broader definition of equality and inclusion and to provide a greater focus on achieving positive equality outcomes. This includes placing a stronger emphasis on the need to evidence 'due regard' by strengthening the Council's approach to Equality Impact Assessments. The expectation is that authorities make much more explicit what they are doing in relation to equalities and inclusion via the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy.
3. This Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy (2020-2024) takes into account the Equality Act 2010 and the Council's legislative requirements within the Public Sector Equality Duty, development in relation to the contents of the previous Strategy and the authority's equality-related work over the course of the last four years. As such the Council's Priority Equality Objectives very much form the focus of this new Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy.
4. The Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy (2020-2024) sets out the Council's objectives and approach to promoting equality and inclusion, good relations and in tackling discrimination and harassment. It recognises that specific actions are needed to address different equality issues whilst also acknowledging many people experience more than one type of disadvantage or discrimination (multiple discrimination).
5. Focus of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy is themed around employment practice, decision-making and developing policies, access to services, culture, working with services and buying services from others and contains objectives that will address these areas. It supports the aims and priorities set within the revised Corporate Strategy 2020-2024 in order to attain the Council's aim of achieving fairness and respect for everyone in all that we do.
6. The new Equality Action Plan 2020-2022 is to be used as supplementary information which will support delivery of the Strategy.
7. The Council has an Equality Working Group with representatives from across the Council. The aim of the group is to ensure effective and co-ordinated action across the Council to reduce disadvantage, discrimination and inequality of opportunity, and promote equality in terms of the people it serves, its workforce, the partners it works with and

the services it delivers. This group have approved the revised Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy & associated Action Plan.

Consultation Approach

9. This Strategy has been based upon the results of the Residents Survey which was conducted in 2019. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic throughout 2020, opportunity has been limited to further engage and consult on the Equality Strategy (2020-2024) and associated Action Plan.
10. The Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy will be made available through the Council's website.

Annex – Draft Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy (2020-2024); Equality Action Plan (2020-2022) and associated Equality Impact Assessment.



Charnwood Borough Council

**Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
(EDI) Strategy**

2020 – 2024

Foreword

We are very pleased to introduce Charnwood Borough Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy (2020-2024) which sets out our commitment for progressing equality and inclusion within Charnwood over the next four years.

This strategy describes how we aim to continue our work to make Charnwood a place where equality is at the forefront of council services as well as the opportunities and experiences of everybody in our communities. It outlines what we will do to make Charnwood a place where people of different backgrounds get on well together so that people are comfortable and happy living in the local area. The Council recognises that delivery of excellent services, through a strong focus on customer access and service, will ensure that local people and communities are at the centre of everything we do.

The Strategy has been informed by lessons learnt through implementing our previous Equality Strategies and associated action plans. It includes details of the progress that we have made to date and sets out our priorities in relation to the nine protected characteristics. It also explains how we arrived at our priorities and includes details of the information we gathered from engagement and involvement activities with a wide range of people including staff, partner organisations, elected members and members of the public.

Charnwood Borough Council is committed to delivering meaningful and lasting improvements for local people, by adopting and developing good equality and inclusion practice. We aim to create a place where people treat each other with dignity and respect. Also essential to this is ensuring the Council employs the best people to deliver this.

This Strategy outlines the steps that the Council intends to take in order to promote equality and inclusion in everything that we do. Whether, this is providing services, employing people, developing policies, communicating, consulting or involving people in our activities. The Strategy is about long term, continuous improvement, and for this reason we recognise the importance of ensuring that the principles of equality and inclusion inform key decision making at every level within the Council.

Cllr. Jonathan Morgan
(Leader of the Council)

Cllr. Leigh Harper-Davies
**(Cabinet Lead Member for
Community Support and
Equalities)**

Welcome to the Strategy- Executive Summary

Welcome to Charnwood Borough Council's Equality Strategy (2020-2024).

Charnwood Borough Council, as a local authority, has both a legal and moral duty to show fairness and equality to our residents, our service users and employees. We are lucky enough to have quite a diverse population in Charnwood and as a result of this we recognise that our residents, customers and employees have very different backgrounds and life experiences. We therefore want to make sure that we continue to provide services and facilities that meet the varying needs of our residents and that, as an employer, we achieve fair recruitment and provide a work environment that is free from discrimination.

This Strategy explains Charnwood Borough Council's legal responsibilities and explains how these duties will be delivered. The Council wants to make sure that people from different groups are not discriminated against or disadvantaged by our actions. We feel that by continuing to progress our commitment to equality and inclusion and ensuring that we design and deliver services that are appropriate and accessible to all sectors of our community this will lead to greater employee productivity, creativity, innovation and flexibility, creating positive impacts for everyone.

Details of the actions that we will be undertaking to tackle the issues that are most relevant to the protected groups are provided in the Action Plan, which accompanies this Strategy. This Action Plan includes the outcomes which we will be aiming to achieve, and details of who is responsible for delivering each action. The Equality Action Plan is available at Appendix 3.

1. Introduction and Purpose

- 1.1 This is the third Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy to be published by Charnwood Borough Council since the Equality Act 2010 was introduced. Over the past ten years the Council has been committed to showcasing how we meet the general and specific requirements of the legislation so that equality, diversity and inclusion is fully embedded in everything that we do.

This EDI Strategy (2020-24) continues to further develop the commitment of the Council, and demonstrate the Council's overall accountability for equalities outcomes, by setting out our vision and outlining how we intend to further develop our approach to advancing equality, diversity and inclusion, good relations and in challenging discrimination and harassment.

The Council recognises that specific actions are needed to address different equality issues, whilst also acknowledging many people experience more than one type of disadvantage or discrimination (multiple discrimination). Therefore, this EDI Strategy (2020-24) will continue to monitor performance and processes and set measurable objectives and actions that seek to support protected and vulnerable people, and groups, whilst overall making Charnwood a fairer place in which to live, work and feel safe.

- 1.2 This EDI Strategy (2020-24) outlines the steps we intend to take to advance equality in everything we do. The Council has statutory responsibilities as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and this EDI Strategy (2020-24):

- Outlines how these duties are to be delivered in making sure that people from different groups are not discriminated against or disadvantaged by the Council's actions
- Demonstrates the Council's commitment to equality and diversity
- Encourages participation and engagement with groups and individuals in the community

- 1.3 This EDI Strategy (2020-24) is about long-term, continuous improvement, and for this reason responsibility for implementing the Strategy lies with the Senior Management Team, Corporate Management Team, elected members and officers across the organisation. The Council recognises the importance of ensuring that the principles of equality and inclusion are well embedded within everything we do within the Council and builds on the consultation, action plans, People Strategy and Equality Strategies we have produced previously.

Therefore, this EDI Strategy (2020-24) will also include the Council's intentions to ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion are integral and fully reflected in all the Council's practices, policies and procedures relating to service provision, recruitment and employment.

2. What have we done since our last plan?

Below we have provided examples of some further successes and achievements:

- In September 2019, all of our Services across the Council achieved the Customer Service Excellence Award. The assessors recognised that we have an in-depth understanding of our customer groups and are committed to raising awareness about diversity.
- We provided written and verbal interpretation services to ensure equal and fair access to our services.
- An equality and diversity communications plan is in place to promote events around specific dates such World Mental Health Day, Black History Month, LGBTQ History Month and Holocaust Memorial Day. This helps us to further understand both our staff and the residents of Charnwood and to communicate key messages to our employees and other stakeholders.
- Events were held to celebrate cultural diversity, for example the Loughborough Mela which is organised annually in conjunction with partner organisations.
- Elected members were actively involved in training sessions following the local elections in May 2019 in order for them to gain the necessary skills and knowledge to continue to provide leadership in furthering the equalities agenda.
- We conducted a residents' survey in Autumn 2019 and undertook a series of engagement activities to gather the opinions of residents, customers and staff which informed the development of this Strategy, the Council's Corporate Strategy and Priority Equality Objectives.
- We have a good reputation, both locally and regionally, for our work on the equality and diversity agenda, and continue to participate in the LeicesterShire Equalities Forum (LSEF).
- We have in place a significantly large programme of equality and diversity learning and development for employees.
- As one of the partners in the Leicestershire Hate Incident Monitoring Project (HIMP) we continue to help raise awareness of the importance of reporting hate incidents and educate people about the impact hate incidents have on their victims- this includes our annual 'Stop and Tell' awareness campaigns.

3. What is Equality, Diversity and Inclusion?

- 3.1 Equality is about creating a fairer society where everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential. It is about ensuring that all people are treated with fairness and respect, recognising the needs of individuals and that some people may need to be treated differently to give them the same opportunities
- 3.2 Diversity is about recognising and valuing difference in its broadest sense and understanding how these differences can be developed for the good of the individual and society as a whole.

- 3.3 Inclusion is about an individual's experience within the workplace and in wider society and, the extent to which they feel valued and included. Successful and lasting inclusion involves a shared vision, values and a sense of belonging for all communities.

4. The Law

- 4.1 The Equality Act 2010 and associated Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) are the main pieces of equalities legislation which set out different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone. The Equality Act 2010 covers nine protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) which cannot be used as a reason to treat people unfairly.
- 4.2 Every person has one or more protected characteristic, so the Equality Act 2010 protects everyone against unfair treatment. This applies whether the discrimination is actual or perceived and if it occurs directly or by association. The details of these protected characteristics can be found in Appendix 1.
- 4.3 The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) includes a general duty which is supported by specific duties. The general duty requires public organisations, including Councils to think about how they can make things better for people from different groups. This includes having 'due regard' to the following:
- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 - Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

For marriage and civil partnerships this protection applies only to the first duty.

- 4.4 We aim to meet our Public Sector Equality Duty by:
- Ensuring our staff, service users and residents receive fair and respectful treatment and are not subject to discrimination or harassment. This includes removing or minimising any disadvantage that people may experience due to their protected characteristic(s).
 - Taking action where the needs of people with certain protected characteristics are different from other people's needs and encouraging them to take a greater part in public life and activities where this is disproportionately low.
 - Publish relevant and proportionate equalities information, and set ourselves specific, measurable equality objectives at least every four years. Our broad goals for 2020-24 are set out in this EDI strategy

which, together with associated action plans are published on the council's website.

- Paying 'due regard' and considering equality impacts before we make decisions affecting residents, service users or employees. This may be demonstrated through an Equality Impact Assessment or other activities/ assessments.
- Publishing our gender pay gap reports by each reporting period
- Monitoring and assessing the impact of our decisions and actions, and whether they are actually reducing levels of inequality.
- Working with communities, partners and agencies across the Borough to promote good relations, and where there is discrimination, challenge it.

4.5 This EDI Strategy (2020-24) also focuses on access to and provision of services and recruitment and employment practices specific to Charnwood Borough Council. We have responsibilities as an employer to ensure that people with protected characteristics are not discriminated against when seeking employment with us, while working for us or when taking part in work-related activities. It also applies to our suppliers or anyone working on behalf of the council.

5. Our Priority Equality Objectives

5.1 In response to the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty, we have now refreshed our Priority Equality Objectives which will underpin this Strategy, the associated Equality Action Plan and guide equality practice across the Council over the next four years. These Priority Equality Objectives pay equal regard to each of the protected characteristics.

5.2 We have aligned our Equality Action Plan to provide a framework for achieving these Priority Equality Objectives. This Plan will be monitored by the Equality Working Group at its quarterly meetings, and the Senior Management Team on an annual basis. We will publish information on our website at least an annual basis to evidence our progress.

5.3 Our Priority Equality Objectives are:

PEO 1: To assess, consult and evaluate the equality impact of our policies and decisions and to change where reasonably possible what we do if it creates inequality.

PEO 2: To enhance understanding of and promote equality and diversity at all levels within Charnwood Borough Council.

PEO 3: To ensure that our staff and Elected Members engage and communicate with members of the community in an accessible and inclusive way.

PEO 4: To have a diverse workforce that aims to be representative of the Borough and to ensure that all staff are treated fairly.

PEO 5: To change where reasonably possible what we do if we find it creates inequality

PEO6: To continue working with our partners, where appropriate, to reduce inequality in all of our communities.

6. Vision and Values

- 6.1 The Council aims to deliver excellent services through a strong focus on customer access and service and making sure local people and communities are at the heart of all policies, procedures, functions and services.
- 6.2 The Council is committed to delivering meaningful and lasting improvements for local people, by adopting and developing good equality, diversity and inclusion practice and demonstrating high levels of corporate and social responsibility.
- 6.3 These are underpinned by our values which are embedded in all aspects of service delivery and partnership working:
- **Pride in Charnwood:** We take pride in our work and our borough and are ambitious for the future
 - **Customer Focused:** We listen to our customers and are focused on delivering excellent services
 - **Working Together:** We work together with pace and positivity as one council and in partnership with others

These values can be found in the Councils Corporate Strategy 2020-2024 and associated annual Corporate Delivery Plan which sets out the Councils ambitions and how we deliver our priorities.

7. How does this Strategy Relate to the strategic priorities of the Council?

- 7.1 This EDI Strategy (2020-24) cannot be delivered in isolation. In order to successfully embed equality and inclusion in all that we do, this Strategy will link closely with other council policies, strategies and strategic priorities as defined in the following:
- Corporate Strategy (2020-2024)
 - People Strategy (2020-2024)
 - Medium Term Financial Strategy
 - Procurement Strategy
- 7.2 In 2019, the Council re-achieved the Customer Service Excellence Award. The assessors recognised that we have an in-depth understanding of our customer groups and are committed to raising awareness about diversity.

- 7.3 This Equality Strategy will be reviewed every four years, in line with the Council's corporate planning process and our legal responsibilities to refresh our Priority Equality Objectives.

8. Our Commitment to Equality

- 8.1 Enabling all our people to be who they are is at the heart of this strategy. If we forget the people behind an equalities issue, we will fail to meet their needs in the best and most inclusive way. But we also believe in recognising and celebrating all the good work that is helping to build and maintain strong relationships between people of different backgrounds, skills and experiences within our workplaces and communities. We want to show how equality matters and the difference it makes to people that they are welcomed in, and can actively contribute to, our wider society. Improving our knowledge of communities, groups and networks and publicising local initiatives and activities will send a strong message that equality underpins everything we do.

8.2 Employment Practices

Charnwood Borough Council considers equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of employment, from advertising vacancies, recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of employment, training and personal development to reasons for terminating employment. We will:

- Advertise jobs in ways that reach all communities and target groups that are currently under-represented in the workforce
- Manage employees fairly and appropriately, ensuring there is no discrimination on grounds of any of the protected characteristics in terms of work allocations, consultation and communication, development and training opportunities, employees personal reviews, granting of leave, service reviews or grievance and disciplinary matters
- Encourage a culture of openness and ensure that all employees have a safe and supportive environment in which to work regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation
- Continue our commitment to be an inclusive organisation that people want to work for and demonstrate this through our accreditation as a Disability Confident Level 2 employer.
- Ensure employees and councillors are given appropriate equalities training and have access to training in anti- discriminatory practices
- Make all reasonable efforts to support employees by making adjustments where appropriate
- Undertake job evaluations and carrying out a pay and grading review, including Gender Pay Gap reporting, as part of the process to develop fair employment and equal pay policies
- Work to provide information and guidance to managers and employees on a range of equalities related issues

8.3 Decision-making and developing policies

Charnwood Borough Council will:

- Assess the potential impact on customers and communities of its policies and practices and take action to improve them

- Involve customers and communities in decision-making through impact assessments and engagement with local community groups
- Ensure access to decision making considers the needs of working people, people with childcare responsibilities, young and older people (venues, time, support and formats)
- Involve and engage local people with disabilities to ensure that we design, plan and provide services to enable them to have more control over their own lives
- Work towards ensuring that all the protected characteristics are fully represented in any consultation undertaken
- Provide services for young people, and older people to meet their particular needs including the provision of targeted services for specific groups where appropriate e.g. youth groups
- Support and encourage initiatives which are set up and run by community groups and which promote social inclusion and equality of opportunity.

8.4 **Access to Services**

Charnwood Borough Council will:

- On request, translate material, provide interpreters and use suitable communications formats as required
- Work to provide information in plain English and make available that information, on request, through a range of media and in a range of formats [including, where appropriate, the provision of materials in symbols, large print, Braille, British Sign Language video or audio description] and offer alternatives to verbal communication so people with disabilities enjoy equal access to information and services
- Ensure our website is as fully accessible as possible
- Monitor use of services by protected characteristics to ensure equality of access, and use the data to develop services which are appropriate to the needs of the whole community
- Ensure all information, publicity and advertising that the Council has control and/ or influence uses positive images and language to counteract the effects of inequality and promotes equality

8.5 **Working with Partners**

Charnwood Borough Council will:

- Ensure consultants, contractors, suppliers, and partners [including those in the voluntary and community sectors] are able to work and deliver services free from harassment and discrimination
- Work with other public sector bodies through the LeicesterShire Equalities Forum to share knowledge of equalities issues, develop best practice and identify measures that can be implemented across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland
- Continue to work with partners such as Leicestershire Police and Leicestershire County Council to increase the confidence of residents to report hate incidents

8.6 **Engaging and consulting with our communities**

We engage and consult with our communities regularly so that we understand our customers' views and can ensure that the services we design, and deliver are appropriate and meet the needs of all.

All policies, strategies and processes within the council are subject to Equality Impact Assessments as appropriate to ensure that they take into consideration the effect they may have on different protected characteristics.

8.7 **Buying services from others**

Charnwood Borough Council will:

- Ensure that our Procurement Strategy and processes provide clear commitment to equality of opportunity and to tackling discrimination and disadvantage
- Require any company or business supplying services to be committed to equality and diversity in its employment practices and service provision, ensuring they adhere to all anti-discrimination legislation
- Monitor, if required, the practices of any contractor or business providing services to the Council or on our behalf of the Council to ensure they act in accordance with our policies and the relevant legislation on equality and diversity

9. **Arrangements for Reviewing Progress against the EDI Strategy (2020-24)**

- 9.1 Progress against the action plan will be monitored by the Equality Working Group and any areas of underperformance or slippage will be reported to SLT.

Protected Characteristics

The duties and the act seek to outlaw unlawful discrimination against a person or group of people because of their:

Age- relates to a person belonging to a particular age group (e.g. 32 year olds) or range of ages (e.g. 65- 75 year olds).

Disability- a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender Reassignment- when a person is transitioning or they intend to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning their gender.

Marriage and Civil Partnership- marriage can either be between a man and a woman, or between partners of the same sex. Civil partnership is between partners of the same sex.

Pregnancy and maternity- pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes not treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

Race- refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins.

Religion or Belief- religion refers to any religion or reference to religion, including a reference to a lack of religion. Belief includes any religious or philosophical belief or reference to belief, including a reference to a lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

Sex- refers to an individual being male or female.

Sexual Orientation – a person's sexual attraction towards people of the gender they are attracted to (i.e. towards people of the same sex, the opposite sex, or to both sexes).

Appendix 2

About the people of Charnwood

In the 2011 Census the population of Charnwood was 166,100 which increased from 153,453 in 2001). This represents an increase of 7.6% or a yearly average of 0.8%. The largest proportion of the population live in the larger settlements of Loughborough (62,233 people), Shepshed (13,505 people), Syston (12,804), Birstall (12,521 people) and Thurmaston (9,668 people).

The population can be broken down by equality group to provide us with a better understanding of the people within our communities.

Age

The age of our population is important when planning services so we can meet the needs of our community. In the 2011 Census, all age groups experienced population growth except for those aged 30-44 which showed a decrease of 5.5%.

The age bracket of 20-24 had the largest increase in population size with an increase by 22% over the past ten years. Those aged 60-64 also saw a similar size increase. We have 39,209 children and young people aged 0-19 representing 23.6% of the total population.

Disability

In Charnwood, it is estimated that there are 10,540 (6.4%) people between the ages of 16-64 with a moderate or serious physical disability. This compares to 12,882 (7.7%) over 65. Nationally it is estimated that 1 in 4 people will be affected by mental health issues at some time in their life. In Charnwood this would equate to 41,525 out of 166,100 residents. Mental health issues can either be short or long term, the most common being mixed anxiety and depression.

In Charnwood there are 290 people aged 18-64 with learning disabilities, who receive community based services and 100 people who receive permanent care. Of those people aged 65+ with learning disabilities, 30 receive community based services and 25 receive permanent care. We have 567 children with Statements of Special Educational Needs or on an Education Health Care Plan.

We are currently in the process of determining how many people residing in Charnwood are registered with sight or hearing loss, or both. It is estimated that there are a high number of people with a sight and hearing loss within Charnwood who have not yet registered.

Gender Reassignment

There are no accurate statistics available regarding the profile of those who identify as trans or transgender within Charnwood or the UK as a whole. Gender identity is not incorporated into the Census or other official statistics. This is something we will look to address in more detail.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Within Charnwood approximately 65,000 people (47.1%) are either married or are in a registered same-sex civil partnership. This is relative to Leicestershire as a whole.

Race

145,114 people (86.2%) of the population identified themselves as 'White' and 20,986 people (12.7%) are from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Groups, which shows an increase of 4,413 people from the 2001 census data. Specific race groups within Charnwood, which the population identified themselves as, are Indian (10,225 people), Other White (4,147 people), Bangladeshi (2,022 people), Chinese (1,943) and Other EU- Accession Countries (1.1% of people).

Religion & Belief (including no religion or belief)

Within Charnwood there are a number of religions and beliefs followed by local people, which include Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Pagan, Sikh and Spiritualist faiths. In the 2011 census (55%) of the population identify themselves as being Christian, 5% Hindu, 2% are Muslim, 1% are Sikh and 1% are all other religions. 29% of Charnwood residents stated that they had no religion.

Sex (Gender)

There is an equal gender split between men and women in Charnwood with 82,900 males (49.9%) and 83,200 females (50.1%). There is a significantly higher age gap between the two sexes for those aged between 19-24, with more male than female. However, there is also a higher than average gender gap between men and women within our older population, with nearly twice as many females as males aged 85 and over. We will continue to monitor emerging data in these areas to further plan future service delivery.

Sexual Orientation

There are no accurate statistics available regarding the profile of the lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) population within Charnwood or the UK as a whole. Sexual orientation is not incorporated into the Census or other official statistics; however, it is acknowledged that approximately 6-10% of any population will be LGB. In Charnwood this would equate to between 9,960 and 16,610 people.

Carers

Within Charnwood it estimated that 10.6% of people provide between 1-50 hours of unpaid care a week. This is reflective of the national average of 10% and is reflective of Charnwood's ageing population. We recognise that care is provided for a variety of reasons, both older and young people, and therefore support is required for carers of all ages.

Gypsy and Traveller Community

In 2012, a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA) was undertaken across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Using baseline data from the 2007 GTAA, caravan count data and information provided by a number of local authorities, the estimation of the number of Gypsies and Travellers across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland in 2012 was 588 families, many of whom may pass through Charnwood and our neighbouring areas.

Asylum Seekers and Refugees

There are no accurate statistics available regarding asylum seekers and recent refugees within Charnwood, or the UK as a whole. It is not incorporated into the census or other official statistics.

In Loughborough there is a Home Office East Midlands Reporting Centre and Loughborough is recognised as a 'Town of Sanctuary' for refugee and asylum seekers to seek support. Therefore, we recognise that there may be a number of asylum seekers and refugees situated in, travelling through or visiting Charnwood.



Charnwood Borough Council
Equality Strategy Action Plan 2020-2022

Introduction

This Action Plan is a key document for recording how service areas and corporate related activity will work to deliver the Council's Priority Equality Objectives and Equality Strategy 2020-2024. This plan will also be used to monitor progress and achievements against the activities in the plan, ensuring targets are on track and delivered.

All services across the Council contribute to the overall delivery of the Equality Strategy and Priority Equality Objectives in a variety of ways. Promoting and embedding equality and diversity both internally within the organisation, and externally across the Borough, requires continuous activity in order to create cultural change with a view to attaining the Council's overarching vision of fairness, respect and equal access to service delivery for all.

This Equality Action Plan therefore includes a number of key milestones, to be met as appropriate, as part of the Council's commitment to providing better outcomes for all people.

Action		Completion Date	Success Measure	Lead
PEO 1: To assess, consult and evaluate the equality impact of our policies and decisions and to change where reasonably possible what we do if it creates inequality				
1.1	Review and update the council's approach to Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)	September 2021	Positive feedback on revised process and EHRIA template Equality related complaints are reduced Equality related legal action is reduced	Improvement & Organisational Development Team
1.2	Develop & maintain an up-to-date Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) completion programme	April 2021	EIA completion programme developed and publicised	Improvement & Organisational Development Team
1.3	Audit Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) completion and publication rates against numbers of planned EIAs and take action where necessary to address issues	March 2022	Annual EIA Report submitted to Equality Working Group and SLT for monitoring and scrutiny	Improvement & Organisational Development Team
1.4	Equality Working Group to act as a critical friend to services in reviewing Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)	Quarterly	Minimum of one EIA per quarter reviewed as part of the monitoring framework	Equality Working Group
1.5	Raise awareness of the EIA process and guidance, through internal communications	May 2021 & May 2022	One article published, per year, to raise awareness of process	Improvement & Organisational Development Team
1.6	Review and update the Council's Equality Monitoring Policy and Guidance	March 2022	Equality Monitoring Policy statement published on-line Improved equality data for service users	Improvement & Organisational Development Team

1.7	Enable and encourage the involvement of communities of interest in service changes, policy changes and consultations	Ongoing	Minimum of one EIA per quarter reviewed in line with the monitoring framework Increased representation of all sections of the community in engagement and consultation	Equality Working Group
1.8	Monitor discrimination related complaints and develop mitigating action, as appropriate	October 2021	Annual report submitted to the Equality Working Group	Human Resources/ Customer Experience Team
PEO 2: To enhance understanding of and promote equality and diversity at all levels within Charnwood Borough Council.				
2.1	Promote the completion of equalities training, including the induction e-learning module, for staff	March 2022	100% new starters undertake equalities e-learning module	Improvement & Organisational Development Team
2.2	Develop an LGBTQ+ e-learning module for staff	September 2021	E-learning module developed, as specified in Leicester LGBT Centre Peer Review Assessment	Improvement & Organisational Development Team
2.3	Provide development opportunities to Elected Members on equality, diversity & inclusion	March 2022	Minimum of two member sessions provided per year	Democratic Services/ Improvement & Organisational Development Team
2.4	Develop regular internal communications to promote equalities related events and celebrations	Ongoing	Articles published as appropriate Staff awareness/ knowledge raised	Improvement & Organisational Development Team
2.5	Present annual report to SLT on equality, diversity and inclusion practice, to raise awareness of both best practice and emerging issues	March 2022	Report issued to SLT Equalities championed at senior level within the organisation	Improvement & Organisational Development Team

PEO 3: To ensure that our staff and Councillors engage and communicate with members of the community in an accessible and inclusive way.

3.1	Develop and deliver external communications to promote equality, diversity and inclusion	Ongoing	Analytics on reach and engagement	Improvement & Organisational Development Team
3.2	Review and update the Council's policy and guidance on making information accessible to everyone	December 2021	Making Information Accessible Policy and guidance produced	Improvement & Organisational Development Team
3.3	Ensure the website up to date with information about services and that this information is accessible to a wide range of service users	Ongoing	National guidelines implemented and feedback acted upon, to maintain an accessible website	Improvement & Organisational Development Team
3.4	Monitor the equality impacts of moving to online/digital services and look to remove barriers or potential adverse impact where it may arise	March 2022	Feedback from users regarding the accessibility of alternative service delivery	SWaP Programme Board/ Equality Working Group
3.5	Further develop the council's approach to consultation and engagement to increased representation of all sections of the community	March 2022	Increased representation of all sections of the community in engagement and consultation	Improvement & Organisational Development Team
3.6	Promote the interpretation and translation service internally through One Charnwood, Intranet etc.	February 2021 & February 2022	No. of services and service users utilising the interpretation and translation service	Improvement & Organisational Development Team
3.7	Engage with service users who have specific communications needs to identify areas where we can improve our communication methods	Ongoing	Communication methods improved based on identified need Feedback/ complaints from service users	Improvement & Organisational Development Team/ Equality Working Group
3.8	Host an annual Holocaust Memorial Day Event (physically or virtually).	January 2021 & January 2022	Host an annual event (physically or virtually) attended by over 30 representatives Event evaluation	Democratic Services Team

PEO 4: To have a diverse workforce that aims to be representative of the Borough and to ensure that all staff are treated fairly.

4.1	Promote self-declaration of protected characteristics amongst staff.	March 2022	Significant % increase against each of the protected characteristics in staff self-declaration.	Improvement & Organisational Development Team
4.2	Produce and publish quarterly workforce monitoring statistics and take action where necessary to address issues	Ongoing Quarterly Updates	Quarterly monitoring and publication of workforce statistics.	ICS/ Improvement & Organisational Development Team
4.3	Develop and implement an action plan to improve recruitment, retention and progression to PO4+ of BAME employees	March 2022	Improved representation of BAME employees at PO4+	SLT/ Improvement & Organisational Development Team
4.4	Report annually on progress towards workforce representation targets to Senior Management Team and where appropriate take action to increase representation of under- represented groups within the workforce	September 2021 & September 2022	Annual progress report produced. Action taken to address issues where appropriate.	Improvement & Organisational Development Team
4.5	Increase no. of staff aged 16-25 entering the workforce through a structured apprenticeship scheme	April 2022	Apprenticeship scheme administered in line with national guidelines. Increased no. of staff 16-25 entering the workforce.	Improvement & Organisational Development Team
4.6	Renew Disability Confident accreditation	September 2021	Progress from Level 2 (Employer) to Level 3 (Leader)	Human Resources/ Improvement & Organisational Development Team

PEO 5: To change where reasonably possible what we do if we find it creates inequality

5.1	Undertake gender pay gap reporting and develop appropriate action to close gender pay gap	March 2021 & March 2022	Reduction in gender pay gap	Human Resources
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5.2	Review Modern Slavery Statement to meet legislative requirements	March 2021 & March 2022	All policies and practices reviewed in line with Modern Slavery legislation	Improvement & Organisational Development Team
5.3	Investigate benchmarking and award schemes to drive improvement and deliver best practice in equality, diversity & inclusion	March 2022	High performance for equality confirmed by independent audits	Improvement & Organisational Development Team
5.4	Produce an annual health check of equality, diversity and inclusion activity and publish both internally and externally.	March 2021 & March 2022	Met Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty responsibilities Feedback from staff, residents and service users	Equality Working Group
PEO6: To continue working with our partners, where appropriate, to reduce inequality in all of our communities.				
6.1	Continue to work directly with partners, local organisations and community groups as well to support delivery of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Hate Action Plan	March 2022	As per Plan	Community Safety Team
6.2	Raise awareness of procurement equality requirements with contract managers (part of wider awareness raising to include safe-guarding and Modern Slavery)	March 2022	Raised awareness of Procurement Toolkit via One Charnwood Quarterly monitoring statistics to be provided by contract holders, where appropriate, showcasing equalities commitments Contract monitoring indicates that commissioned service providers are compliant with equalities requirements	Procurement Team

6.3	Work collaboratively with partners including supporting and contributing to the work of the Leicester Shire Equalities Forum (LSEF) and other associated partnership projects	March 2022	Feedback on joint campaigns and products	Improvement & Organisational Development Team
6.4	Support the Prevent Action Plan and the multi-agency Prevent Steering Group to ensure we are highlighting concerns or risks in our communities related to radicalisation	April 2022	As per plan	Community Safety Team

Charnwood Borough Council

Equality Impact Assessment 'Knowing the needs of your customers and employees'

■ **Step 1 – Introductory information**

Title of the policy	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy 2020-2024
Name of lead officer and others undertaking this assessment	Suzanne Kinder Equality Working Group (EWG)
Date EIA started	September 2020
Date EIA completed	November 2020

■ **Step 2 – Overview of policy/function being assessed:**

Outline: What is the purpose of this policy? (Specify aims and objectives)
<p>The Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy sets out how the Council will fulfil its commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. The aim of the Strategy is to show how the Council is embedding and continuing to work towards achieving real equality and promoting diversity.</p> <p>The Strategy fully sets out the Council's commitment to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing fair and inclusive services and employment opportunities for everyone in Charnwood 2. Developing and embedding Charnwood's six Priority Equality Objectives 3. Having 'due regard' to each of the nine protected characteristics and promoting and embedding them in everything that we do 4. Eliminating unlawful discrimination; advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between individuals and community groups 5. Promoting and celebrating diversity <p>The Strategy is the Council's key strategic document driving equality, diversity and inclusion priorities across Charnwood.</p>
What specific group/s is the policy designed to affect/impact and what is the intended change or outcome for them?
<p>The Strategy includes a number of equality objectives to achieve positive outcomes in both service design and delivery, and in employment for everyone in Charnwood.</p> <p>The Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy identifies real and achievable objectives for the Council which will enable it to fulfil its commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. By achieving the objectives set out in the Strategy the Council will achieve positive outcomes for individuals and communities in service design, delivery and employment. Therefore, a wide range of people will benefit from the positive outcomes achieved through this Strategy with the main beneficiaries being the residents of Charnwood, Council employees and partners across other organisations.</p>
Which groups have been consulted as part of the creation or review of the policy?
<p>Key to the development of this Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy was consultation with, and the engagement/ involvement of various individuals and groups. We have consulted with, and will continue to engage specifically with, diverse groups who have in the past felt under-represented and/ or that have specific requirements in relation to this Strategy.</p>

Consultation was carried out via a Residents Survey in 2019, which also informed development of the Council's Corporate Strategy (2020-2024). Responses generated through consultation were taken on board and the final version of the Strategy reflects this.

Step 3 – What we already know and where there are gaps

List any existing information/data do you have/monitor about different diverse groups in relation to this policy? Such as in relation to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation etc.

Data/information such as:

- Consultation
- Previous Equality Impact Assessments
- Demographic information
- Anecdotal and other evidence

Gained relevant evidence & research from:

- National and local research/ statistics
- National guidance on the Equality Act 2010 & associated Public Sector Equality Duty
- Equality & Human Rights Commission research and website
- Research from charities and community organisations regarding the 'protected characteristics'
- Staff groups i.e. Staff Forum; Equality Working Group

What does this information / data tell you about diverse group? If you do not hold or have access to any data/information on diverse groups, what do you need to begin collating / monitoring? (Please list)

Within both national and local data, there is little local information on sexual orientation and gender reassignment. This may potentially create barriers when supporting these two protected groups.

Step 4 – Do we need to seek the views of others? If so, who?

In light of the answers you have given in Step 2, do you need to consult with specific groups to identify needs / issues? If not please explain why.

No further consultation required at this stage.

Step 5 – Assessing the impact

In light of any data/consultation/information and your own knowledge and awareness, please identify whether the policy has a positive or negative impact on the individuals or community groups (including what barriers these individuals or groups may face) who identify with any 'protected characteristics' and provide an explanation for your decision (please refer to the general duties on the front page).

	Comments
Age	The Strategy and the Council's commitment to equality and inclusion is likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of age, particularly relating to the three general duties of the Equality Act 2010.
Disability (Physical, visual, hearing, learning disabilities, mental health)	The Strategy and the Council's commitment to equality and inclusion is likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of disability, particularly relating to the three general duties of the Equality Act 2010.
Gender Reassignment (Transgender)	The Strategy and the Council's commitment to equality and inclusion is likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of

	<p>gender reassignment, particularly relating to the three general duties of the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>A potential barrier here is access to, and availability of relevant information. There is little local information on gender reassignment as the Council, and many other organisations, do not have a range of equality monitoring information to support this group.</p>
Race	<p>The Strategy and the Council's commitment to equality and inclusion is likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of race, particularly relating to the three general duties of the Equality Act 2010.</p>
Religion or Belief (Includes no belief)	<p>The Strategy and the Council's commitment to equality and inclusion is likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of religion or belief, particularly relating to the three general duties of the Equality Act 2010.</p>
Sex (Gender)	<p>The Strategy and the Council's commitment to equality and inclusion is likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of sex, particularly relating to the three general duties of the Equality Act 2010.</p>
Sexual Orientation	<p>The Strategy and the Council's commitment to equality and inclusion is likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of gender reassignment, particularly relating to the three general duties of the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>A potential barrier here is access to, and availability of relevant information. There is little local information on sexual orientation as the Council, and many other organisations, do not have a range of equality monitoring information to support this group.</p>
Other protected groups (Pregnancy & maternity, marriage & civil partnership)	<p>The Strategy and the Council's commitment to equality and inclusion is likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities with regards to the protected characteristic of pregnancy & maternity and also marriage and civil partnerships particularly relating to the three general duties of the Equality Act 2010.</p>
Other socially excluded groups (carers, low literacy, priority neighbourhoods, health inequalities, rural isolation, asylum seeker and refugee communities etc.)	<p>The Strategy and the Council's commitment to equality and inclusion covers a variety of other groups such as: rural isolation, deprivation, health inequality, carers, asylum seeker and refugee communities, looked after children, deprived or disadvantaged communities. The specific actions are likely to have a positive impact on individuals and communities.</p>

Where there are potential barriers, negative impacts identified and/ or barriers or impacts are unknown, please outline how you propose to minimise all negative impact or discrimination.

Please note:

- a) If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is illegal, you are required to take action to remedy this immediately.
- b) Additionally, if you have identified adverse impact that is justifiable or legitimate, you will need to consider what actions can be taken to mitigate its effect on those groups of people.

The Strategy is aimed at achieving fairer employment practices and more appropriate and accessible service design and delivery. However, it is recognised that positive outcomes are dependent upon the effective implementation of the Strategy.

One of the main barriers to the effective implementation of the Strategy is cultural, behavioural and attitudinal. A range of training for employees and elected members is a specific way to tackle this. Additionally, the promotion of positive message and raising the profile of equality and inclusion across the authority will also support this.

Summarise your findings and give an overview as to whether the policy will meet Charnwood Borough Council's responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity (please refer to the general duties on the front page).

It is the opinion that the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy will comply with Charnwood Borough Council's responsibilities. It will further promote equal opportunities and achieve positive outcomes with the main beneficiaries being the residents of Charnwood, Council employees and partners across other organisations.

■ Step 6- Monitoring, evaluation and review

Are there processes in place to review the findings of this Assessment and make appropriate changes? In particular, how will you monitor potential barriers and any positive/ negative impact?

Progress against the Strategy and associated Action Plan will be continually monitored by the corporate Equality Working Group and a report on the progress towards achieving the aims, objectives and targets within them will be produced annually.

How will the recommendations of this assessment be built into wider planning and review processes? e.g. policy reviews, annual plans and use of performance management systems.

The recommendations of this assessment will be built into the Strategy to ensure positive outcomes are achieved. Any identified recommendations will be available to use when planning future service delivery.

■ Step 7- Action Plan

Please include any identified concerns/actions/issues in this action plan:

The issues identified should inform your Service Plan and, if appropriate, your Consultation Plan

Reference Number	Action	Responsible Officer	Target Date
001	Continue to ensure that monitoring of the Strategy and associated action plan is carried out on an annual basis and allows for effective monitoring of outcomes.	S. Jackson	Ongoing

■ **Step 8- Who needs to know about the outcomes of this assessment and how will they be informed?**

	Who needs to know? (Please tick)	How they will be informed (we have a legal duty to publish EIA's)
Employees	✓	This assessment will be attached as an appendix to the Cabinet report and will also be published on the equality's pages of the website.
Service users	✓	
Partners and stakeholders	✓	
Others		
To ensure ease of access, what other communication needs/concerns are there?		

Please delete as appropriate
I agree with this assessment / action plan
If <i>disagree</i>, state action/s required, reasons and details of who is to carry them out with timescales:
Signed (Service Head): <i>S. Jackson</i>
Date: 01/11/20

[Please send completed & signed assessment to Suzanne Kinder for publishing.](#)