

Report to Cabinet

Subject: Annual update on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Date: 21 May 2026

Author: Deputy Chief Executive

Wards Affected

All Wards

Purpose

To update members on the progress made across the Council on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion actions as well as other work undertaken in relation to improving equality, diversity and inclusion in the provision of Council services in 2025/26.

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Recommendation

THAT Cabinet:

- 1) Notes the work undertaken on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan and the wider work undertaken by officers and members to strengthen the Council's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion in the performance of its functions.

1 Background

- 1.1 In March 2024, Cabinet approved an amended Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy following public consultation. As part of the agreed approach to EDI, actions supporting the policy were agreed as part of annual delivery planning for 2025/26. This report provides an update on work carried out under the policy and associated actions in 2025/26. A detailed progress report against equality actions taken from the Council's

performance management system is attached at Appendix 1.

1.2 The EDI Policy references the need to report annually to Cabinet on progress. Work in relation to EDI has been monitored closely in 2025/26 by the Strategic Equality and Diversity Group, led by the Portfolio Holder for Vulnerability and Life Chances and the Budget and Performance Board, an officer board which reviews and monitors performance.

1.3 **Strategic Equality and Diversity Group**

The policy document sets out the responsibilities for equality and diversity within the Council and references a Strategic Equality and Diversity Group (SEDG) with membership consisting of the Leader and Deputy Leader, Portfolio Holder and Policy Adviser with responsibility for equalities, a member from each opposition group, the Chief Executive and Director responsible for Equalities (currently the Deputy Chief Executive). This group has met on a quarterly basis throughout 2025/26. In particular, the following initiatives and work streams have been developed and supported by the SEDG in 2025/26:

- Supporting the staff EDI group the Gedling Inclusion Group (GIGs), considering recommendations from the group and supporting implementation including a communications campaign to raise awareness on appropriate language in the workplace.
- Continued review of hate crime data to establish any trends affecting communities.
- Review of all equality related complaints and recommended appropriate action to mitigate.
- Contributed to the communications plan for 2025/26 to ensure appropriate support of equality related events and initiatives.
- Received feedback on the Council's Social Mobility Commission which is chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Vulnerability and Life Chances.
- Received regular updates on workforce improvements linked to EDI
- Supported the roll out of intensive EDI face to face training for officers and members
- Received updates on key legislative changes in relation to EDI

1.5 Training

The Council rolled out face to face mandatory EDI training for all officers of the Council which was delivered from December 2025 onwards with further dates remaining in 2026/27. The training is interactive drama-based training tailored for different work cohorts and levels of staffing with some key management tips included. Feedback from the training has been positive with 92% of staff having completed the sessions so far.

The training was also offered to all members. Two sessions have been held with members and 39% of members have completed the training so far.

1.6 Equality Framework and Action Plan

The Council's original Equality Framework and Action Plan was developed taking into account the Local Government Association Equality framework for Local Government. The EDI actions agreed for 2025/26 were aimed at improving the Council's performance against that framework which covers four themes:

- Understanding and working with your communities
- Leadership and organisational commitment
- Responsive services and customer care
- Diverse and engaged workforce

1.7 For 2025/26 14 actions were agreed. Of those 11 have completed, 2 are ongoing and 1 is no longer applicable. Completed actions include:

- Obtaining citizen feedback and engagement on CRM implementation through liaison with Senior Council and forms testing.
- Roll out of EDI training to Councillors, managers and front-line staff
- Continued monitoring of EDI actions through SEDG
- Launch of a communications campaign about EDI including appropriate workplace language (GIGs)
- Creation of a social value policy and procedure including EDI related outputs
- Review of Gedling Employee/Leader and Manager standards to ensure EDI is included
- Review of terms of reference for GIGs
- Assessment of underrepresentation in the workforce using employment data

- 1.8 The outstanding actions which have commenced but not completed will be carried into 2026/27. One of these actions is to ensure appropriate EDI risks are linked to the Corporate risk register. A number of risks have been identified but now need adding to the Council's risk system Pentana and linked to Corporate Risks which are currently being reviewed. The second action relates to improved data held about customers to better inform decision making. The launch of the CRM system internally in 2025/26 has enabled this work to commence with data about customers captured more accurately in one place to ensure effective handling of customer complaints and accounts. As further implementation of that system occurs in 2026/27 further data will be collated.
- 1.9 The action which was not completed and is now to be removed from the action plan relates to the development of a Funding strategy which included assessment of equality implications when bidding for funding. With the commencement of LGR this piece of work has not been undertaken. Opportunities for external funding bids are likely to be reduced heading into LGR, given that all capacity is linked to the delivery of the Legacy Plan priorities and only bids for funds directly linked to those priorities are likely to be progressed. Whilst a funding strategy is no longer being developed, it will be key to ensure EIAs continue to be completed in relation to decision reports going forward and this is enforced by Senior Leadership Team.
- 1.10 The Gedling Inclusion Group (GIGs) is an officer group made up of representatives across service areas. The group meet regularly to discuss EDI and report into SEDG meetings. Most recently, the group have launched a second staff survey into EDI following a previous survey in 2024. Findings will be reported into SLT and SEDG. GIGs have also launched a communications campaign into appropriate workplace language which was timed alongside the improved EDI training offer to all staff.
- 1.11 In addition to specific targeted actions in the plan, there has been a range of activity undertaken across the Council to support EDI objectives. These include:
- Youth Council presentation to Council in relation to White Ribbon day and the Council's 16 days of action posts to support and end to Violence against Women and Girls
 - Celebration of International Women's Day where some of the amazing women who support the borough's vibrant voluntary and

community sector shared their stories and showcased their work to support the borough.

- Promoted Health and Wellbeing opportunities through a series of videos focusing on a variety of health issues including frailty and falls prevention.
- With UKSPF and other digital funding support, the Council enabled a range of activities to improve digital inclusion for our most vulnerable residents
- Ongoing work with partners and stakeholders to combat Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) with domestic violence training offered for officers and members.
- Supported the Caribbean Elders celebration to mark Black History Month. Councillor Kathryn Fox attended along with Louise Garvey one of the figures represented in the Standing in This Place Sculpture which was unveiled in Nottingham City centre in 2025 with a replica placed on display at the Council offices.

1.12 As we move into 2026/27, Equality Actions are now being included within the Council's Annual Delivery Plan either as key actions or milestones under key actions. The Annual Delivery Plan was approved in April 2026 and is attached at Appendix 2, the equality related actions are highlighted with an EQ reference and link back to the Legacy Plan approved by Council in March 2026. The main actions are:

- Continue to progress digital inclusion in partnership with geographical neighbours and subject to Government funding
- Complete accessibility audits for all council-managed websites
- Update the HR Information system to increase efficiency, enhance data security and support strategic decision making
- Subject to final business case, commence construction of Carlton Active incorporating sustainability and accessibility considerations
- Review the Employees EDI Policy and implementation of an action plan with a focus on creating an accountable workforce and an inclusive, supportive culture to staff wellbeing
- Update HR Policies to comply with Employment Rights Act 2025
- Create a well-being strategy that supports staff mental health and wellbeing to aid a resilient workforce going through change

1.12 It should be noted that whilst both officer and member resource has been deployed to support the development of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, no additional, dedicated resource has been provided. The Council must ensure compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty and has maintained its statutory responsibilities in terms of the publication of Equality Objectives through the Annual Delivery Plan as

well as publicising data on gender pay gap.

2 Proposal

- 2.1 It is proposed that Cabinet note the work undertaken by officers and members in relation to the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, the wider EDI work undertaken and the work proposed for 2026/27.

3 Alternative Options

- 3.1 This information could not be reported, however, it is considered important that members are informed of the progress against the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Action Plan and the Council's policy document references reporting to members.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 In terms of the financial implications, there are no direct financial implications arising from this report.
- 4.2 As indicated, there is no dedicated resource associated with the equality agenda and the work and associated budgets form part of approved budgets within service areas.

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Council has a statutory duty to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The policy, and actions demonstrates how the Council seeks to comply with its Public Sector Equality Duty. In addition, the SEDG receive updates on any relevant case law or significant legislative changes to ensure compliance with equality law.

6 Equalities Implications

- 6.1 By its nature this report seeks to update members of the Council's work to strengthen equality of access to services for residents and staff. The work undertaken by the Council in respect of EDI has a positive impact on those

with protected characteristics.

7 Carbon Reduction/Sustainability Implications

- 7.1 There are no carbon reduction/sustainability implications arising from this report.

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

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- 8.1 LGR related actions are included within the Annual Delivery Plan and where equality impacts are associated this is referenced. At this stage the focused activities relate to workforce preparation for LGR. There will need to an alignment of policy and process in respect of EDI across the new authorities and careful consideration of Equality impacts as we move through the key stages of reorganisation.

8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Action Plan 2025/26
Appendix 2 – Annual Delivery Plan Equality Actions for 2026/27

9 Background Papers

- 9.1 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

10 Reasons for Recommendations

- 10.1 To update the Executive on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion work undertaken in 2025/26.

Statutory Officer approval

Approved by:

Date:

On behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Approved by:

Date:

On behalf of the Monitoring Officer