

THE WORKFORCE EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PLAN

2025–2028



MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL

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INTRODUCTION

A message from our leaders



I am Manchester City Council's City Solicitor and Senior Management Team (SMT) Lead for Equalities. I am proud to endorse the Council's Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan.

The Council is strongly committed to advancing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Our people are at the heart of every-thing we do, and we are committed to ensuring our workforce reflects the diversity of the communities we serve at all levels and that the Council is a place where everyone feels safe, valued and respected.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of discrimination and unwanted behaviour, and I am committed to pro-actively tackling discrimination and taking the strongest possible action when needed.

We have built a strong infrastructure to support the Council to achieve its strategic EDI ambitions, which include Staff Equality Networks, Directorate Equalities Leads, and Equalities Champions, who are committed to making the Council the best place to work for everyone.

I am proud of the progress we've made, but I also recognise that there is still a lot more work we must do.

This plan, informed by the voice and experiences of our diverse workforce, sets out a roadmap to deliver

organisational change and improve workforce inclusion. This will be done through ensuring our leaders and managers are role models for inclusion, investing in education and learning, strengthening policies and processes, and prioritising our efforts to become an anti-racist council and an employer of choice for disabled people.

I am confident this plan will accelerate our journey towards a more diverse and inclusive council and turn our ambi-tions into reality.

**Fiona Ledden,
Senior Management Team Lead
for Equalities**



As the Executive Member for Finance and Resources at Manchester City Council, I am proud to endorse the Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Plan.

Manchester is a thriving, diverse and dynamic place to live and work, and the Council is at the heart of city life, so it's imperative that it reflects the vibrant communities it serves. By fostering a workplace where everyone feels valued, respected and empowered, we create better outcomes for the residents of Manchester.

Since the launch of the Workforce Equality Strategy 2021, we've made good progress to improve workforce equality, diversity and inclusion. This is reflected in increased representation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff, disabled staff, and positive feedback from our annual staff survey.

However, we recognise that for the Council to become truly inclusive is a continuous journey. This plan outlines our continued commitment to EDI and sets out actions that will accelerate our progress, address our challenges, and ensure we build a workforce – our most valuable resource – that reflects the communities we serve at all levels.

Councillor Rabnawaz Akbar
Executive Member for Finance
and Resources



As Deputy Leader of the Council with responsibility for Equalities, I wholeheartedly support the Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan and am proud of the work that has gone into producing it.

I am co-chair of the Corporate Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Group and have seen first-hand the progress we have made as a council in EDI over the past five years. While we recognise that there is still much work to do, this strategy demonstrates we are on the right path to bringing about meaningful change.

This plan outlines a clear path to creating a Manchester where everyone can thrive, regardless of their background. By embedding EDI into the heart of our workforce culture, we not only enhance the lives of our residents, but also unlock the full potential of our city. This plan is essential to building a more inclusive, equitable and prosperous Manchester for all.

Councillor Joanna Midgley
Deputy Leader with responsibility
for Equalities



OUR VISION



Members of the Workforce Equality Plan group

For Manchester City Council to be a place where our workforce fully reflects the rich diversity and talent of the communities we serve at all levels, and a place where everyone can be their best and thrive.



OVERVIEW

The Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty

The plan supports the Council to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty, which re-quires us to:

- » Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Equality Act 2010

The Act is a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.

The Act **protects people against discrimination, harassment or victimisation in employment**, and as users of private and public services based on nine protected characteristics.

The Act protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes fairness and equality.

The protected characteristics are:

- » Age
- » Disability
- » Gender reassignment
- » Marriage or civil partnership
- » Pregnancy and maternity
- » Race
- » Religious belief
- » Sex
- » Sexual orientation.

Our plan is informed by the importance of intersectionality, which recognises that there are multiple parts to our identity and these different parts shape our experience and often lead to distinct forms of discrimination.

Developing a Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan

Definitions to help ensure consistency for this document's purposes:

Equality

Ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their talents.

Equity

Recognising that each person has different circumstances, and allocating the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.

Diversity

Recognising that everyone is different in a variety of visible and non-visible ways, and that those differences are to be acknowledged, respected, valued, promoted and celebrated.

Inclusion

Working environments where everyone is treated fairly and respectfully and where their unique contributions and back-grounds are valued.

Belonging

When an individual feels they can bring their whole self to work and be accepted.

Intersectionality

How multiple categories of identity or several specific characteristics we share can shape our experiences and lead to distinct forms of discrimination or disadvantage.



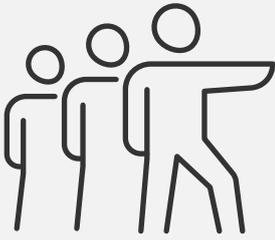
**OUR
ACHIEVEMENTS**

- » **Established a Corporate Equalities, Diversity and Leadership Group**, which provides assurance for the Council/Senior Management Team on the progress we are making to advance equalities and address inequalities
- » **Senior workforce equality objectives** – all senior leaders have an equality objective that forms part of the senior appraisal and is linked to pay progression. Objectives are aligned to the delivery of the Workforce Equality Strategy
- » **Staff Equality Network** – ten staff networks. Each group has a work programme aligned to the delivery of the Workforce Equality Plan
- » **Our Manchester fifth behaviour** – developed and embedded a new behaviour: we show that we value differences and treat people fairly
- » **Let's Talk About Race (LTAR)** – 3,039 (53.5%) employees have completed LTAR
- » **Leadership pathway programme** – delivered six programmes; 86 employees attended and 23% secured a promotion
- » **LeadHERship programme** – delivered four programmes; 51 women attended and 39% secured a promotion
- » **Developed a Disability Action Plan** – setting out how we will improve the experiences of disabled employees
- » **Workplace Adjustment Hub** – provided support, advice and guidance for disabled employees, employees with long-term health conditions, and line managers
- » **Policy improvements** – introduced a menopause policy, and third-party abuse and harassment policy; strengthened the recruitment and selection policy, gender transition in the workplace, and embedded zero tolerance in key policies
- » **Strengthened our corporate communications** – celebrating the diversity of our workforce and improving visibility.



OUR PRIORITIES

1



INCLUSIVE
LEADERSHIP

2



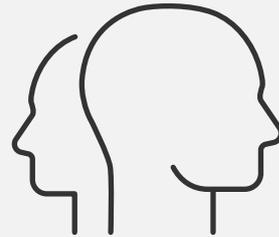
BEING A GOOD
LINE MANAGER

3



RACE AND
ANTI-RACISM

4



DISABILITY AND
NEURODIVERSITY

5



ATTRACTING,
DEVELOPING
AND RETAINING
DIVERSE TALENT

6



EQUITABLE
AND INCLUSIVE
WORKPLACE



1. Inclusive leadership

We will:

Be clear on what we expect from our leaders

- » Our leaders are role models for inclusion and provide visible, accountable and inclusive leadership.

Provide support and development to get it right

- » Educate, train and support our leaders so they have the knowledge, tools and confidence to drive and embed equality, diversity and inclusion.

Strengthen individual accountability

- » Strengthen senior leadership equality performance objectives.
- » Incorporate equality, diversity and inclusion questions into feedback for leaders.

Strengthen corporate accountability

- » Strengthen service planning to ensure each service develops and delivers meaningful activity to advance equality, diversity and inclusion.
- » Establish internal peer reviews to independently support and challenge service performance on equality, diversity and inclusion.
- » Every directorate will develop an equality, diversity and inclusion plan focused on workforce and delivering inclusive services.
- » Facilitate an annual equality, diversity and inclusion engagement session between the Senior Management Team (SMT) and the Corporate Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Group (CEDILG) to discuss pro-gress, challenges and impact.



2. Being a good line manager

We will:

Be clear on what we expect from our line managers

- » Our line managers actively champion equality, diversity and inclusion.

Provide support and development to get it right

- » Educate, train and support line managers to have the knowledge, tools and confidence to embed equality, diversity and inclusion and lead an inclusive team.
- » Ensure that line managers are trained on key people-management policies and practices.

Strengthen individual accountability

- » Line managers will be expected to demonstrate in their Our Conversations how they are actively championing equality, diversity and inclusion. Necessary steps will be taken where this isn't demonstrated.
- » Incorporate equality, diversity and inclusion questions into feedback for line managers.



3. Race and anti-racism

We will:

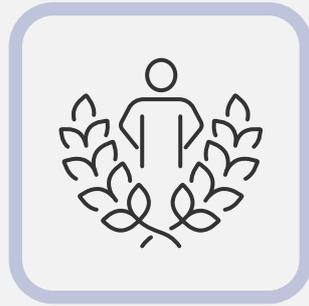
- » Develop an anti-racism framework to support the Council to become an anti-racist employer, by proactively seeking out and addressing racism in our structures, policies, processes and practices
- » Appoint a Senior Leader to lead on advancing anti-racism
- » Develop a race equity learning and education programme
- » Continue to deliver positive action programmes to drive internal progression and increase the representation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic employees at senior levels
- » Increase the representation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic employees so that our workforce better reflects the diversity of the communities we serve at all levels
- » Review the delivery model for Let's Talk About Race to maximise the effectiveness of the training
- » Regularly monitor race equality employment data (recruitment, progression, representation, turnover and exit interviews) to inform interventions and activity
- » Further embed our zero-tolerance approach to racism
- » Understand more and educate others on the meaning of intersecting identities and using lived experiences to shape our work.



4. Disability and neurodiversity

We will:

- » Deliver the actions in the new Disability Action Plan
- » Become a neuroinclusive employer by raising awareness, reviewing people-management practices and em-powering neurodivergent voices
- » Regularly monitor disability-equality employment data (recruitment, progression, representation, turnover and ex-it interviews) to inform interventions and activity



5. Attracting, developing and retaining diverse talent

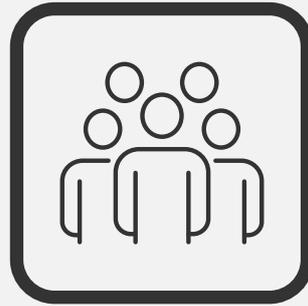
The Talent Plan sets out our approach to attracting, developing and retaining diverse talent at all levels of the Council.

The Talent Plan supports our EDI ambitions through key actions:

- » Improving our end-to-end recruitment process to ensure every stage is inclusive
- » Reviewing our approach to senior recruitment to ensure we attract and recruit leaders from marginalised communities
- » Ensuring inclusive talent management and succession planning
- » Delivering positive action programmes to drive internal progression and increase representation of marginal-ised communities at senior levels
- » Working with local communities and education institutions to promote the Council as an employer of choice, and attract local diverse talent
- » Maximising apprenticeships, graduates, and work experience.

Talent

Manchester City Council Talent Plan 2023-26



6. Equitable and inclusive workplace

We will:

- » Strengthen our learning and development offer to ensure that we build confidence, knowledge and understanding on key areas of equalities, such as race, disability, neurodiversity, faith and belief
- » Develop a culturally competent workforce that understands and meets the needs of our diverse communities
- » Embed and monitor our key policies and continually review our policy framework to ensure it is inclusive, equitable and well communicated
- » Create 'safe spaces' to empower staff to talk about workplace concerns
- » Build a culture of inclusion by further embedding the Our Manchester behaviours at an individual, service and organisational level
- » Continue to support our Staff Equality Networks to provide support and challenge on our approach to EDI and to drive change across the Council
- » Ensure staff have a voice and that there is representation in decision-making structures
- » Ensure our communications celebrate our diversity and demonstrate our commitment to EDI
- » Deliver our Age-Friendly Employer action plan
- » Continue to deliver the trans and non-binary inclusion plan
- » Reduce pay gaps (gender, ethnicity and disability)



OUR TARGETS

Embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion across our Workforce Strategies

The Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan is the Council's overarching Workforce Strategy. It sets out five strategic priorities that will build a talented, diverse and thriving workforce with the capacity and capability to deliver the Corporate Plan, Our Manchester Strategy, and great services for residents.

To achieve our vision and accelerate our journey, EDI needs to be at the heart of everything we do. That's why we've ensured our other workforce strategies are aligned to and support our EDI ambitions.



Improve our end-to-end recruitment process to ensure every stage is inclusive.

- » Review our approach to senior recruitment to ensure we attract and recruit leaders from marginalised communities.
- » Deliver positive action programmes to drive internal progression.
- » Work with local communities and education institutions to promote the council as an employer of choice and attract local diverse talent.
- » A holistic approach to women's health (including pregnancy loss, period problems and menopause support)
- » Supporting staff who experience racism
- » Supporting staff who are gender transitioning.



Driven by data and intelligence

High-quality and meaningful data and evidence are key to understanding the progress, challenges, barriers and impact of our approach to EDI.

In 2023, we produced a 'Manchester City Council Diversity Profile'. This provides a detailed insight into the diversity of our workforce and includes key measures such as:

- » Workforce compared to Manchester's population
- » Workforce diversity by grade bands
- » Recruitment and retention
- » Intersectionality
- » Training
- » Staff survey
- » Casework (disciplinary, grievances).

We remain committed to collecting, utilising and interpreting equality, diversity and inclusion data, and we will continue to produce and strengthen the Diversity Profile to promote transparency and accountability, and to inform decisions on progress and impact.



MEASURING IMPACT

What does success look like?

We will monitor progress and measure our impact through:

- » Workforce diversity profile
- » Recruitment, retention and progression rates
- » Talent and positive action programmes
- » Annual staff survey
- » Feedback from Staff Networks
- » Feedback from leaders and line managers
- » Increased diversity of the Council's workforce so that it better reflects the communities that we serve at all levels.
- » Increased representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and disabled staff in leadership posts.
- » Improved internal progression and retention of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and disabled staff
- » Staff from marginalised communities feel a strong sense of belonging and inclusion at the Council.
- » Reduced Gender, Ethnicity and Disability Pay Gaps
- » Leaders and line managers have greater confidence and capability to drive and embed EDI.
- » Everyone working at the Council has a good understanding of EDI, Race, Disabilities and intersectionality.
- » Everyone working at the Council is better equipped to meet the needs of our diverse communities.
- » Reduced number of discrimination cases

Our aspirational workforce diversity targets

The Workforce EDI Plan sets out our vision for our workforce to reflect the communities that we serve at all levels and for the Council to be a place where everyone feels safe, valued and respected.

We have set aspirational workforce diversity targets to support our commitment for our workforce to better reflect the communities we serve at all levels. Setting these targets enables us to better understand our progress, opportunities and the challenges we face.

We have set targets for race and disability that recognise the significant underrepresentation and barriers that these staff experience.

We will continue to monitor all protected characteristics and the experiences of all our workforce, and we will take action when required.

Workforce		Target			
		2024	2025	2026	2027
Black, Asian and minority ethnic	Overall	24%	27%	31%	37%
	Grade 10–12	14%	17%	21%	26%
	SS Grades	6%	9%	13%	19%
Disability and long-term health conditions	Overall	8.8%	8.8%	9.5%	10.2%
	Grade 10–12	29.1%	9.8%	10.5%	11.3%
	SS Grades	6.6%	7.3%	8%	8.8%

**Thank you to everyone from the
Workforce Equality Plan group who
helped to inform this plan, including:**



Grace Heneghan



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Martin Oldfield



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