

Kirklees Council

Inclusion and Diversity

Strategy 2021/23



Recovery through inclusion



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Introduction

Kirklees Council is proud to be diverse and inclusive.

Our strength comes from recognising, respecting and valuing our differences across the community, and being proud of the people and places that make Kirklees special.

We are in a key phase of recovery, and inclusion is at the heart of this. We have all been affected by the pandemic in some way, navigating the same storm but in very different boats. The values of inclusion, kindness and pride are key to how we move on to create communities where people can be themselves, feel valued for the contribution they bring, and in which we are proud to live and work.

The new Council Plan sets out the overarching approach to recovery, with inclusion at the heart of what we do across the organisation, framing all our work within our ambitions for achieving an **inclusive recovery**.

Background

As the existing Inclusion and Diversity Strategy comes to an end and we work on a new one, it is timely to take stock of where we are as an organisation and a community.

The 2017-21 Inclusion and Diversity Strategy looked to modernise the Council's approach to equality, and move beyond compliance with legislation to build stronger, safer, more resilient communities. The Action Plan (which was refreshed and revised regularly) read alongside the Strategy details some key activities which took place, and the Annual Report contains the outcomes achieved. An overview can be found at Appendix C. The 2019 audit from Inclusive Employers also provided a useful steer on where it was felt efforts should be concentrated in order to have the most impact.

Key achievements we are building on include:

- **A committed and diverse workforce:** Further strengthening how we recruit and support staff with protected characteristics
- **Positive and inclusive approach:** Developing further the Diversity = Innovation Network, and Kirklees Diversity Awards
- **Zero tolerance:** additional training for staff to support colleagues and learn more about hate crime
- **The way we do things in Kirklees:** More inclusion-focussed events, and expansion of the 'Passport' system for reasonable adjustments
- **Inclusive policies:** Building on developments to the Integrated Equality Impact Assessments to a full rework, incorporating improvements to the collection and use of intelligence
- **Spread the word:** Partnership work continuing across the district through anti-racist work, and with the new West Yorkshire Mayor
- **Listen and act:** Further developments for the employee networks

At the beginning of the 2017-21 Strategy, it was certainly not anticipated that the period would cover a pandemic, and a shift towards crisis management and business continuity which saw the entire organisation tilt on its axis towards entirely new ways of working. The pandemic shone a light on, and exacerbated, the pre-existing inequalities faced by sections of our workforce and our communities which manifested themselves in devastating new ways, so we knew then that inclusion had to be at the heart of our recovery.

This new Inclusion and Diversity Strategy centres around that recovery. The lessons learnt from the pandemic have shown that there are elements of our processes which need fixing, to ground us in our communities and make sure we are thinking about citizens at the beginning of every conversation about what we want to achieve. We want to equip our staff to work within the Inclusive Communities Framework to support communities who need additional support with their own post-pandemic recovery. There are lessons for us around how we listen to, build relationships with, learn from, and are allies for one another to bring about a confidence in kindness. We can capture the resilience in our communities and inspire them.

Our core approach

Our core approach in this Strategy is to strive to:

- Be a committed and diverse workforce, built on dignity and respect for colleagues and citizens
- Be responsive to customers' needs, enhancing our evidence base on inequalities and communities to determine local priorities
- Actively improve internal processes that support the effective, data-driven delivery of Council services for all citizens
- Ensure that inclusion is at the forefront during budget decision-making, service design and delivery, and recovery in the post-pandemic world
- Integrate inclusion and diversity in all Council services
- Work with partners across the district and wider region to improve outcomes for Kirklees' citizens

Underpinning this approach are the organisation's fundamental values of:

- **Inclusion** – just as we have come together as an organisational community, we want to make sure that we use that experience to ensure our overarching culture encompasses diversity and equality in our working lives, and in our work with communities across the district
- **Kindness** – Using a relational approach and emotional intelligence to foster wellbeing, creativity and productivity
- **Pride** – Seeing positive outcomes from the inclusion and kindness we have shown colleagues and citizens will shape the next steps in a truly inclusive recovery

The inclusion and diversity work we aim to deliver through this Strategy will not stand in isolation. Priorities link clearly with those in the Place Standard Framework; the Inclusive Communities Framework, Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and Inclusive Economic Strategy which are currently being refreshed; Kirklees Futures; the Access to Services Strategy; plus, the People Strategy and Data and Insight Strategy in development.

Key themes driving the new strategic focus

Collecting and sharing information

- Effective use of data and insight has a major part to play in achieving our ambitions for Kirklees, supporting evidence-led decision making.
- The aims of the new Data and Insight Strategy align with this Inclusion and Diversity Strategy
- Apply local data and analysis to programmes of work, plans and policies
- Integrated Equality Impact Assessments – making these work for the whole organisation. These should not be considered as an extra thing we have to do – instead they are a crucial starting point for making sure we are delivering what the community wants and needs, and doing no harm, to protected characteristic groups and the environment

Understanding and working with the Community

- We want to challenge assumptions about our people and communities, and work hard to understand others
- Continue the great work focussing external engagement on everyday experience
 - Place-based work across the district
 - The Iroko Project – engaging the Black African and Caribbean community in Kirklees to understand the lived experience around inequalities and co-produce community-led solutions
 - Listening circles in employee network groups
 - BAME Elders Housing research
- Use the data we have from this to plan service delivery and design

Responsive services and customer care

- Integrate equality planning into how we develop Council services, ensuring that we support all communities, and welcome new people to those communities
- With the Corporate Plan having inclusion at its core, ensure that other plans such as the Procurement Strategy (with its social value principles) and Community Asset Transfer Plan respond in the same way, not least because of the PSED
- Again, use tools such as the IEIAs to make the impact on people the focus of our work – if we're not having an impact on the community, why are we doing it?
- Individual Services can demonstrate how they are going to be inclusive within their own action plans

Diverse workforce development

- Build on success in this area (e.g. BAME Leadership Programme, name-blind applications, the early stages of Project Search)
- Recommendations from Inclusive Employers
- Cultural confidence– create a comprehensive programme of training for all staff at all levels. Responsibility lies with managers to ensure that training is bespoke and developmental for all staff, linking with personal and team objectives
- Strengthen and develop the employee networks

Priority actions

For the three priority areas from last year, we will be continuing to work on those which have not yet concluded and embedding good practice where it has been established.

Health Checks	Breaking Barriers	Inclusive Employers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Due to the pandemic, work on this project was delayed. ➤ Delivery of the programme began in November 2021 targeting four areas in Kirklees to encourage citizens to access health and wellness information and treatment in a community setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This is a partnership project with Conscious Youth ➤ The project aimed to build capacity for BAME young people in Kirklees to develop the confidence and skills to take on leadership roles and address structural inequalities in civic organisations across Kirklees, and has established projects such as the Leadership Programme, Conscious Boys, Stepping Up Stepping Out, and Voices to Action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Progress continues towards achieving the audit recommendations ➤ Next steps for this year include developing our employee networks, continuing workplace profiling, and recruitment changes such as name-blind applications, workshop-based selection, and attendance at work fairs ➤ Enhancing Organisational Development to develop allyship programmes, and make progress towards a recognised equality accreditation

There are a number of goals and ambitions we have in relation to inclusion and diversity over the duration of this Strategy. Within it, we will have four new **priority actions**:

1. Inclusion First
<p>This priority action area will ensure we consider diversity and inclusion at every step of the process as we reshape Council services in a post-pandemic world. This will require all services to incorporate inclusion in the first stage of project development, service delivery and organisational change. We know that inclusion and diversity is an essential first step in thinking about how services work well for Kirklees' citizens.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will redevelop the Integrated Equality Impact Assessments to use as an essential tool to scope new projects, and refocus inclusion at the heart of budget decision-making, service development and organisational change. ➤ We will work alongside the Access to Services Strategy, and the developing Data and Insight Strategy to identify new opportunities for the application of data to all our work, making sure gaps or inequalities are identified, and we can work better alongside the communities who need our support the most
<p>Impact Putting Inclusion First will mean we are making better decisions for our communities. We can be confident that we are not just listening to our citizens, but taking action centred on their needs. Reworking our processes to realign inclusion as a first thought, rather than an after-thought, will mean the impact is felt more strongly in communities which need it the most, especially during this crucial phase of recovery. Our communities will feel valued, included and better served by their Council.</p>

2. Project Search
<p>This priority action is the pilot of an internship programme for young adults with learning disabilities and autism. It builds on our commitment to diversify the workforce, and support one of the most underrepresented groups across Council staff. We want to strengthen our support for neurodiverse staff and listen to feedback to ensure that our systems and procedures work for all.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will seek to diversify our workforce and develop inclusion across teams, working with one of the most under-represented groups within our community ➤ We will have sustainability in mind, looking at how we can build on the project in future years.
<p>Impact Adults with learning disabilities account for less than 9% of the workforce in Kirklees. During lockdown, young people were hit particularly hard, being more likely to be away from paid work than any other group.</p>

This project will turn this under-represented group into colleagues and valued team members, opening up opportunities for them, and for wider teams to learn from the interns. This priority action will be truly life-changing for those young people who we support to their first jobs, and onwards to the wider workforce.

3. Culturally Confident Colleagues

Just as we want to go beyond compliance in our work towards a more inclusive Kirklees, we recognise that being culturally competent is not enough – we want staff to feel **confident** working with all colleagues and citizens and being respectfully curious. We define this as having the knowledge and skills to understand your own cultural values, and then using these to create respectful interactions with others, through listening to, learning about and understanding their cultural values.

It is every employee's responsibility to make sure we understand one another and the wider community. Cultural confidence training will become a core element of our essential induction and refresher training, focussed by managers to ensure training is bespoke to individuals.

- We will go beyond being 'competent' in understanding our colleagues and communities; we should be **confident** that we are taking steps to listen, to learn, and to have difficult conversations and take action as a result.
- We will develop person-centred inclusion and diversity training for staff which will equip them with that confidence, and to not allow a fear of using the wrong language get in the way of doing our best work
- We will develop Our Kirklees Welcome, using a strengths-based approach, including the incorporation of inclusion into the development of appraisals
- We will obtain a recognised equality accreditation

Impact

Culturally confident colleagues make great allies. We are clear that we will lead from the top across the district to become an inclusive employer of choice. This happens when we celebrate our diversity, learn from others, and take pride in confidently spreading the word that Kirklees represents and values everyone.

4. Inclusion Allies

This priority action builds on the success of the Employee Networks. As more people join Employee Network members on their own inclusion journeys, we want to recognise those staff who really champion diversity across the organisation, broadening Network membership to include a new tier of allies.

Successes in new models of inclusion work, such as through the Iroko Project, can form the basis of how we broaden activities to other network groups. Support from allies will be crucial for this.

- We will add a tier of Inclusion Allies to our Employee Networks, a ‘critical mass’ of staff who do not necessarily identify with a particular protected characteristic group, who want to make a difference, lending their support to Networks as and when needed, and listening to the challenges staff often face, and being able to take positive steps to advocate for inclusion across the organisation.
- We want Inclusion Allies to spread the word; to use their privilege to speak up when others are not heard, all the while ensuring that the lived experiences of people with protected characteristics have priority.
- We will train and support Inclusion Allies to be effective allies to all underrepresented voices, building their confidence with appropriate terminology and tools.
- Each network will decide how they want allies to interact with their network, ensuring the voices of those with protected characteristics are not lost in a larger membership group.

Impact

Inclusion Allies will be expected to model inclusive behaviours and values across their sphere of influence, challenging exclusion, and advocating for diversity and inclusion across the organisation and communities.

Allies are essential to make inclusion an everyday reality for employees and citizens, and to create an environment where everyone is represented and valued.

Impact and monitoring

The full impact of inclusion and diversity projects can take some time to be truly felt and measured. By prioritising a number of early actions, we hope to create an environment where processes are reshaped, where pilot projects are established, and where the value and practical work of inclusion can reach wider and deeper across the organisation.

An annual report will continue to be submitted to Councillors and Senior Management, with additionally quarterly progress reports. Measuring the impact of inclusion and diversity measures is challenging, but success measures are expected to include:

The redevelopment of Integrated Equality Impact Assessments, creating an online tool, linked to the tableau dashboard.
Training and awareness events and activities to reframe the process of Integrated Equality Impact Assessments as an early stage activity in scoping out changes to services, policies and strategies.
Improved sharing of data across the Council and with partners to inform inclusion work
Ten Project Search interns completing internships across Council departments
At least 50% of Project Search interns securing future employment with the Council
Development of a suite of 'Cultural Confidence' learning and development opportunities, including training for managers on supporting their staff with inclusion and diversity training and opportunities (such as Employee Networks)
Improvement in the inclusion and diversity elements of 'Our Kirklees Welcome', linking measuring and rewarding inclusion activities in 1to1s and appraisals
The creation of Inclusion Allies, an extra tier to Employee Networks
Enhancement of the Inclusion and Diversity Hub
Attain an appropriate equality accreditation mark
Managers will be trained and supported to ensure that their staff can access all Employee Networks
Go beyond mandatory pay gap reporting to develop the reporting of pay discrepancies for other protected characteristic groups

Appendices

Appendix A: Some Definitions

Equality is about creating a fairer society where everyone can participate and has the same opportunity to fulfil their potential.

Equality is focused within a legislative framework – the main piece of legislation is the Equality Act 2010. The Act is designed to address unfair discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

There are nine ‘protected characteristics’ covered by the Equality Act: age, disability, gender reassignment (transgender), marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.

Diversity involves more; it is about valuing the full range of differences between people in the workplace and the wider society.

Promoting diversity acknowledges that entry into the workplace, and an employee reaching their potential once there or a customer’s ability to access council services and opportunities can be impacted / influenced by a range of factors beyond the characteristics included within the equality legislation, including social, economic and educational background, professional background, hierarchal level, working styles. It involves an understanding of the perceptions and experiences of others – employee / customers belonging to minority and majority groups (and the impact of conscious and unconscious bias).

Diversity is also a description of the way an organisation looks and how well it serves its customers / population. It paints a picture of different types of people at different levels in the organisation and how well different customer needs are met in service planning, commissioning and delivery. This is the result of ‘harnessing and valuing difference’. – The legislation is an important element but the scope of diversity goes further than the ‘legal minimum’. It should be noted that diversity must be valued without (negatively) stereotyping difference so as to avoid any / perpetuating any inequalities.

Inclusion within the equality and diversity context:

- is about including all people
- is about the culture, environment and processes operated by the organisation
- is measured by how people feel (results from how people are involved)
- requires effort to be achieved.

Inclusion is about the individual’s experience and the extent to which they feel valued and included. Working to achieve inclusion involves effectively managing change and a continuous effort to maintain diversity.

Appendix B: Legal requirements

When public authorities carry out their functions, the Equality Act says they must have due regard or think about the need to do the following things:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't
- foster or encourage good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Having due regard means public authorities must consciously consider or think about the need to do the three things set out in the public sector equality duty. It's the courts who decide if a public authority has done enough to comply with the duty.

The Equality Act says public authorities should think about the need to:

- remove or reduce disadvantages suffered by people because of a protected characteristic
- meet the needs of people with protected characteristics
- encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life and other activities

The equality duty covers the nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Public authorities also need to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination against someone because of their marriage or civil partnership status. This means that the first aim of the duty applies to this characteristic but that the other aims (advancing equality and fostering good relations) do not apply.

Public authorities are required to monitor and publish all of the protected characteristics of their employees

- It is a mandatory requirement for all larger public sector employers, with 250 or more employees, in England to publish statutory calculations every year showing how large the pay gap is between their male and female employees

Specific duties

Public authorities also have specific duties under the Equality Act to help them comply with the public sector equality duty.

Public authorities must do the following:

- publish equality information at least once a year to show how they've complied with the equality duty
- prepare and publish equality objectives at least every four years

The Annual Report will provide this information.

Appendix C: Key successes from the 2017-2021 Inclusion and Diversity Strategy

Of the seven key areas in the last Inclusion and Diversity Strategy, there has been significant progress, of which colleagues should be considerably proud. Inclusion never stops, though, and this table sets out where we are now, but crucially where we hope this work will develop in the future. More details on the achievements and plans relating to the 2017-2021 Inclusion and Diversity Strategy are available in the [2020-21 Action Plan](#).

I&D Policy Statement Area	What has been achieved	What next
A committed and diverse workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Name-blind recruitment implemented ➤ Data collection across all equality groups has improved ➤ Virtual work experience programmes ➤ Creation of a BAME leadership programme ➤ Early development of Project Search – internships for young people with learning disabilities ➤ Development of an improved careers website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continue to encourage reporting of protected characteristics, supporting services through the upcoming Data and Insight Strategy to develop effective data monitoring measures ➤ Move Project Search to be a priority area for this Strategy ➤ Launch the new Careers website, with a focus on inclusion and diversity
Positive and inclusive approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Diversity Calendar of important events to celebrate through the Corporate Calendar ➤ Creation of the Kirklees Diversity Awards ➤ Achievement of the Inclusive Employers Bronze Standard ➤ Founder member of the Kirklees Diversity = Innovation Network, which shares best practice across the public, private and voluntary sector in Kirklees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Benchmarking of our internal I&D processes through the IE Bronze Standard has given us a series of areas to progress in order to reach an even higher standard ➤ Develop our collaboration with partners and learn from best practice across sectors
Zero tolerance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hate crime awareness – campaigns have taken place to encourage crime awareness and the reporting of hate incidents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hate crime awareness campaigns to be included in Learning and Development programmes and incorporated into the People Strategy

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Training for managers to support staff experiencing hate crime incidents
The way we do things in Kirklees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A series of events aimed to improve inclusion and diversity across the organisation and wider community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ National Inclusion Week ○ LGBT Pride (40th anniversary of London Pride coming to Huddersfield) ○ Black History Month ○ Our inaugural South Asian History Month ○ Mental Health Week ○ Men's Health Week ➤ Creation of Working Carers Passports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I&D events continue to feature in the Corporate Calendar, in collaboration with the Communications Team, incorporating new methods of qualitative evidence capture, such as restorative listening circle feedback ➤ Development and increased awareness of the Working Carers Passport
Inclusive policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Inclusion and Diversity has been made an organisational priority, with a commitment to address structural inequalities that exist within the Council and the district ➤ Kirklees Welcome has an increased emphasis on inclusion and diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Development of Integrated Equality Impact Assessments ➤ Improvements to the collection and use of qualitative data and intelligence
Spread the word	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Networking with local partners, such as through the Diversity = Innovation Network ➤ External-facing events, such as the Inclusion and Diversity Awards ➤ Articles on the staff intranet from senior officers on topics such as the menopause, working carers, living with cancer ➤ Founding member of the West Yorkshire Mayor's Fair Work Charter programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continue to develop partnership work through the Diversity = Innovation ➤ Continue work with the West Yorkshire Mayor on I&D matters, including the Fair Work Charter ➤ Support partners to develop their social value work, and encourage them to strive to go beyond compliance with inclusivity ➤ Continue progress towards the aims of the West Yorkshire Race Equality Network, such as

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Significant partnership work through the West Yorkshire Race Equality Network 	<p>through the Health Inequalities Academy and the Root Out Racism campaign</p>
Listen and act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increased activity and joint working / support for the employee networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clear guidance for managers that staff should be encouraged to get involved with the networks ➤ Consideration of next steps for the networks

Appendix D: Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan

Priority Area	Outcomes / Objectives (what are we looking to achieve?)	Activity (what are we going to do?)	Performance measures (how are we going to assess progress?)	Timeframe* (*depends upon the decision on the duration of this Strategy)
Inclusion First	<p>Employees feel confident they are considering inclusion as an essential first step in thinking about how services work for communities; through project development, service delivery and organisational change.</p> <p>Systems change across the institution will have inclusion at its heart, with staff proud that they can put their community knowledge into action to best serve citizens.</p>	<p>Redevelop Integrated Equality Impact Assessments (IEIAs), through an integrated online platform where officers can access relevant insight to enable them to develop services in partnership with communities.</p> <p>Alongside the Data and Insight Strategy, scope new opportunities for the application of data to all our inclusion work. Use IEIA development to create a tableau of data, where IEIAs can be utilised and evaluated as dynamic documents and systems</p> <p>Support and work with Children’s Services to address recommendation 4 (Tackling Growing Inequalities) of the Kirklees Futures Strategy, such as with working class communities.</p>	<p>New Integrated Equality Impact Assessment process</p> <p>Evidence of the application and consideration of relevant data and insight through the IEIA</p> <p>A sample of IEIAs to be submitted to a relevant group for quality assurance and monitoring</p>	<p>New process in place by January 2023</p> <p>Evaluation of the use of IEIAs and the generation of relevant data for future project scoping by September 2023</p>

Project SEARCH	Workplace diversity is enhanced by targeting the underrepresented group of young adults with learning disabilities and / or autism, creating meaningful opportunities for them to enhance our teams.	<p>Establish an internship programme for young adults with learning disabilities and autism.</p> <p>Put in place strategies to ensure the sustainability of the project in future years, and our continued support for this area of the workforce</p>	At least 50% of interns secure employment with Kirklees Council	Pilot project completed by September 2022
Culturally Confident Colleagues	Employees feel confident interacting with people different to themselves, understanding their own cultural values and those of colleagues and citizens, enabling them to represent and value everyone	<p>Develop person-centred I&D training for staff which will equip them to work confidently alongside culturally different colleagues and citizens</p> <p>Develop Our Kirklees Welcome, using a strengths-based approach, including the incorporation of inclusion into the development of appraisals</p> <p>Create a shared understanding of inclusion, building confidence and skills, with ongoing training in line with restorative principles</p> <p>Establish a blended approach to colleague development including 'bite size' resources, self-service guides, short topic learning sessions, longer</p>	<p>Survey-based – include a diversity question in the Pulse Survey – to benchmark ahead of implementation of this Strategy, and then afterwards</p> <p>All staff to complete some element of inclusion training</p>	<p>First survey January 2022</p> <p>Training developed 2022</p> <p>Follow-up survey January 2023</p> <p>All staff to have undertaken some inclusion training by January 2023</p>

		programmes, action learning sets or listening circles		
Inclusion Allies	Employees are encouraged to join at least one Employee Network, either as a member or ally, or undertake personal development opportunities in order to champion diversity across the organisation and wider society	<p>Create an Allies Network to support and amplify the work of the Employee Networks</p> <p>Train and support Allies Network members to be effective allies to all underrepresented voices, building their confidence with appropriate terminology and tools.</p> <p>Ensure the voices of employee network members are prominent, even with increased ally membership</p>	<p>Membership details of Networks gathered, differentiating between those sharing a protected characteristic and allies.</p> <p>Training developed for allies to respectfully support and champion people with a protected characteristic, fostering good relationships across groups</p>	<p>Membership open immediately</p> <p>Training developed 2022</p> <p>Survey of networks carried out NIW 2022</p>

ACHIEVING INCLUSION