

Policy and Sustainability Committee

10am, Tuesday, 10 December 2024

Diversity and Inclusion Strategy update

**Executive/routine
Wards**

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Committee are asked to note progress with the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (2019-2024)
- 1.2 To review and approve the proposed Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy for the period 2024-2028. Committee are asked to note that future progress updates on the annual action plans associated with the lifespan of this Strategy will be reviewed at Finance and Resources Committee as part of the People Strategy theme 'foster a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion'.
- 1.3 Committee may also want to refer to People Strategy Theme: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Deep Dive presented to Finance and Resources Committee in November 2024 for further information on activity and progress.

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Report

Diversity and Inclusion Strategy update

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report meets our commitment to provide an annual update on progress with the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for the period 2019-2024. As such this report will provide some key highlights of progress made during this period. Progress with the 2023-2024 annual action plan, and future action plans, will be reported to the Finance and Resources Committee.
- 2.2 The report also details the refreshed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for the period 2024-2027.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy was developed and agreed by the Diversity and Inclusion Focus Group and approved at Policy and Sustainability Committee on 1st October 2019. Annual action plans and progress updates have been provided on 6th October 2020, 5th October 2021, 1st November 2022 and 24th October 2023.
- 3.2 This report refers to activity undertaken across the five years since the strategy was approved and introduces the refreshed EDI Strategy for 2024-2028, including how this was developed and what the key drivers are for the work we must do next.

4. Main report

- 4.1 The 2019-2024 D&I Strategy was set out under three strategic themes, some highlights of activity under each are provided below:

4.2 Theme 1 - Developing Our Understanding

- 4.2.1 **Colleague Equalities Data** - We've improved the quality of the equalities data we hold for colleagues by ensuring alignment with national and inter-authority data sets which now mirror the Scottish Census equalities data. We've made significant improvements of up to 38% to our own reporting rates through a series of targeted campaigns encouraging colleagues to provide and update their details. We have a 100% completion rate for all new appointments as the data is requested during the recruitment process. Candidates are offered an option of 'prefer not to say'. Our disclosure rates reflect 'prefer not to say' as disclosed information.

| Protected Characteristic | Disclosure Rates | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|--------|----------|
| | Nov-20 | Aug-24 | Variance |
| Disability | 77.4% | 85.7% | 8.3% |
| Marital Status* | 79.1% | 63.0% | -16.1% |
| Race | 79.5% | 86.4% | 6.9% |
| Sex | 100.0% | 100.0% | 0.0% |
| Gender reassignment | 2.4% | 40.4% | 38.0% |
| Sexual orientation | 11.0% | 43.7% | 32.7% |
| Religion or belief | 8.9% | 44.5% | 35.6% |
| Age | 100.0% | 100% | 0.0% |
| Carer status | 0.0% | 37.8% | 37.8% |

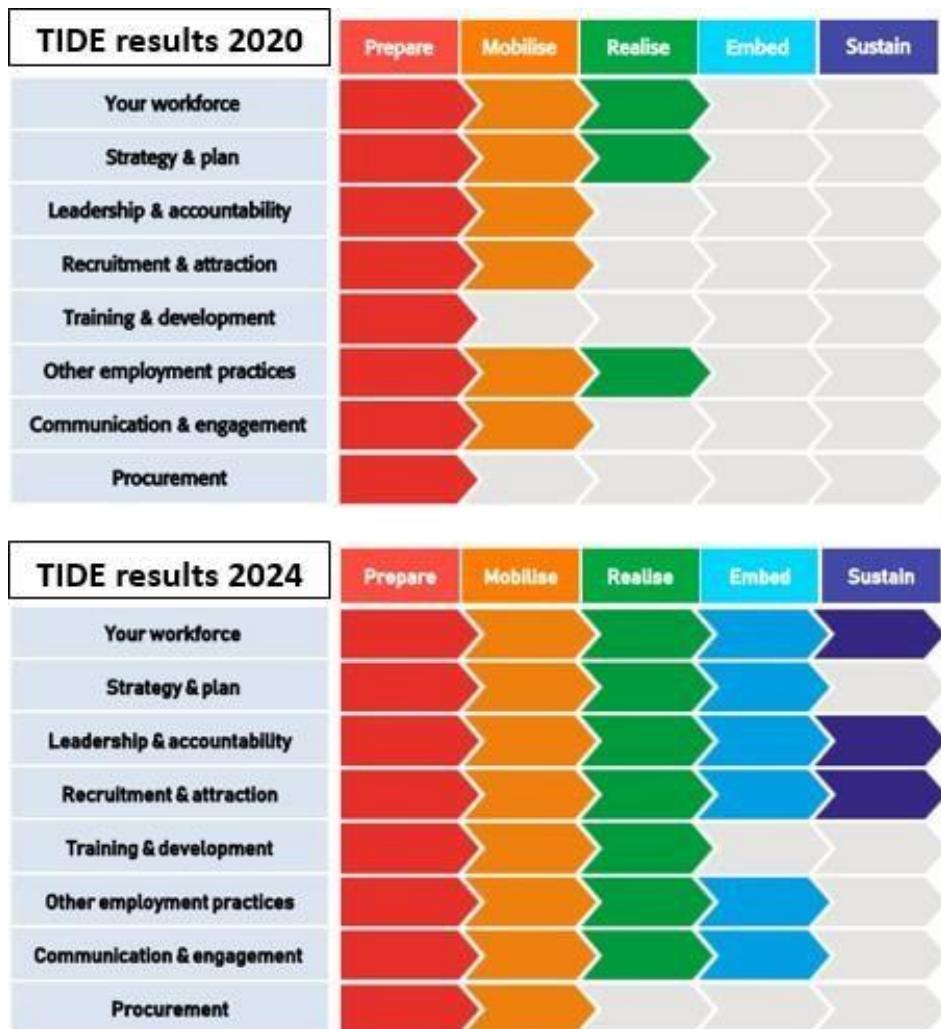
* when we moved to the Scottish Census question set, there was no category to map across data from individuals who had selected 'single' as an option so there was a significant drop in the data we hold as a result.

4.2.2 Pay Gap Reporting - We've voluntarily reported ethnicity and disability, as well as gender, pay gap data and developed this information into a 'heatmap' which allows us to look at the impact of intersecting identities on pay gap outcomes such as the pay gap for a part-time black female as opposed to a full-time white male. This has enabled detailed and robust analysis of where we might best target our resources for the most positive outcomes for colleagues. We've seen a reduction in our mean gender pay gap of 3% during this period from 4.8% in 2019 to 1.8% in 2024.

4.2.3 External Benchmarking - Each year we undertake external benchmarking using the Employers Network for Equalities and Inclusion tool TIDE which measures progress against 8 key areas:

- your workforce
- strategy and plan
- leadership and accountability
- attraction and recruitment
- training and development
- other employment practices
- communications and engagement
- procurement

We've seen year on year improvements which has provided a baseline from which to measure success and a focus on areas for development throughout the programme.



"We have enjoyed working with the City of Edinburgh Council over the last 4 years and it has been a pleasure to be able to support the council in progressing its EDI Strategy and to support with delivering meaningful EDI training to its workforce.

During this time, we have witnessed great progress and have seen the council's TIDE score increase from 33% to 68%

We look forward to continuing to support the council going forward, as the team continue to make great strides in creating a workplace culture where all people feel valued, included, and able to perform to their best" (Employers Network for Equalities and Inclusion)

4.2.4 Partnership Working - We've engaged extensively with external specialist organisations to develop our understanding of inclusive practice across a range of protected characteristics and to provide a measure of our success in many cases. Gathering insight from organisations with specialist expertise has helped shape our approach in many areas and particularly in policy development. Partners include Disability Confident, Carer Positive, Mindful Employer, Race Equality Matters, Stonewall, Autistica, Close the Gap, Council for Ethnic Minority Voluntary sector Organisations (CEMVO), Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (CRER), and Edinburgh and Lothians Regional Equality Council (ELREC).

4.2.5 **Consistency of Approach** - As the lead authority for the Society of Personnel and Development Scotland (SPDS) equalities portfolio, we've undertaken collaborative work with members to develop a consistent approach to the collection of equalities data from applicants. We've secured agreement for all Scottish local authorities to record and report pay gap data in a consistent manner. Research and benchmarking activity confirmed that there were significant inconsistencies including roles and payments in scope as well as snapshot data dates. A pilot to test the new approach is underway with proposed implementation date of April 2025.

4.3 Theme 2 – Creating an Inclusive Culture

4.3.1 **Colleague Networks** – We now have five equalities-focused council-wide colleague networks which continue to be critical to our work. We've provided additional support, role clarity and a small budget to help them achieve their goals and activities. A regular monthly meeting with HR and the network chairs has been established which has promoted collaborative working and pooling of resources and creative ideas. Our first colleague network conference took place in October 2024.

4.3.2 **Learning and Development** - We've invested resources in delivering a programme of learning and development designed to raise awareness about equalities issues including Active Bystander, Anti-Racist Practice, Islamophobia Awareness, Inclusive Culture and sessions with the Human Library. We've launched a new equalities module which is mandatory for all colleagues and new starts to the organisation and developed three digital learning programmes aimed at raising awareness about the lived experience of colleagues who are neurodivergent, colleagues from minority ethnic backgrounds and colleagues from the LGBT+ community. We've also delivered a transgender awareness workshop for CLT.

4.3.3 **Policy and guidance** – We've reviewed and updated or introduced policies and guidance to become more inclusive in language and approach. These include our Recruitment and Selection Policy, Flexible Work Policy, Domestic Abuse Policy, Sexual Harassment Policy, Transgender Guidance and Menopause Guidance.

4.3.4 **Celebrating diversity** – We've established an annual diary of dates which is used to highlight days, weeks or months of particular significance to under-represented or marginalised communities including, for example, Black History Month, Islamophobia Awareness Month, PRIDE and International Women's Day. These dates are well supported by the colleague networks who deliver a range of activities including producing awareness raising materials and in-person promotional or pop-up events aimed at engaging the wider colleague population.

4.3.5 **Challenging unacceptable behaviour** – We've introduced a system to record prejudice-based incidents, including a record of the outcome of the investigation. An extensive poster campaign was used to promote the new system but reporting rates remain low and we have further work to do to embed this with colleagues and managers. We've developed a Protecting Our Colleagues in the Workplace Policy and guidance to ensure colleagues and managers are clear about their respective roles when incidents occur and to make clear our position as an employer in this respect. We've begun developing additional guidance looking at the specific considerations when handling incidents affecting particular marginalised groups.

Supporting guidance in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity has already been published. Guidance in relation to race / ethnicity is due to be published shortly with further guidance to support neurodivergent colleagues and colleagues with a disability or long-term health condition to follow.

4.3.6 **Reverse Mentoring** - Our reverse mentoring programme concluded in December 2023. At the outset each mentoring pair agreed their objectives and during the 18-month programme mentors influenced change in the behaviour or understanding of their mentees. There are examples of where mentees have positively used their improved insight to take practical steps to remove barriers within their service. The programme closed with a workshop in which the mentees shared what they had learned through the programme personally and professionally, the actions they had already taken and planned to take as well as their ideas for contributing to an anti-racist action plan for the City of Edinburgh Council. Each mentor described the one action they'd like to see from senior leaders collectively to change or continue after the programme. Work has commenced on the co-creation of an anti-racist action plan for the organisation.

4.4 Theme 3 – Attracting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce

4.4.1 **Reasonable adjustments** – In collaboration with the SPARC colleague network we developed new guidelines for managers on reasonable adjustments including legal context and obligations, different types of reasonable adjustments that may be appropriate for different conditions, the introduction of a Health Adjustment Passport for colleagues and emphasis on a person-centred rather than process-driven approach. A practical monthly workshop has been developed with help from our Trade Unions and SPARC so that managers can find help when they need it. Digital learning on neurodivergence, allyship and reasonable adjustments has been published in myLearning hub which supplements the guidance and similar learning for people with a disability or long-term health condition is being developed for launch later this year

4.4.2 **Inclusive recruitment** - We've reviewed our end-to-end recruitment process for potential barriers to participation and applied an equalities lens throughout to identify, reduce and remove opportunity for bias within the process. This included analysis of recruitment data, revision of recruiting manager guidance on preparation for assessment and selection and implementation of the guaranteed interview scheme for care experienced candidates. We've moved to using recruitment questions which reflect Our Behaviours of *respect, integrity and flexibility* and introduced a compulsory module on unconscious bias for all recruitment panel members. We've developed an Inclusive Culture module for managers looking specifically at inclusive recruitment practice.

4.4.3 **Attracting candidates** – We've reviewed and updated our 'Working for Us' pages on our external website and worked with service areas where there are particular recruitment challenges to provide promotional video material as a way of attracting a more diverse candidate pool. We've launched a new candidate survey to seek the views of candidates on their experience of the recruitment process and will use the insight gained from this to further refine our approach.

4.4.4 New ways of working – Analysis of pay gap data (on gender, ethnicity and disability) and engagement with key stakeholders has informed two specific priorities around attraction, recruitment and progression of colleagues. The presumption of full time working as a default position when advertising posts appears to present unintended barriers to progression and career development for particular groups such as colleagues with caring responsibilities, single parents, colleagues with a long-term health condition or disability and colleagues from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds. We've agreed pilots within services across Place, Corporate Services and Education, Justice and Children's Services. Each pilot will extend part-time, job share or otherwise flexible working arrangements across a wide range of posts. These arrangements will be determined in line with the needs of the service and service user. In addition, we have agreed a further pilot to diversify the workforce at senior levels (grade 9-12 or equivalent) as we are conscious that under-representation of women, colleagues with disabilities or long-term health conditions and colleagues from minority ethnic backgrounds (where the pay gap is increasing) is creating a negative impact on our pay gap data.

We recognise that new data about our ethnicity and disability pay gaps indicates we have a significant amount of work to do to close these gaps. Both pilot projects are designed to encourage applicants from minority ethnic backgrounds and applicants with disabilities or long-term health conditions to apply for posts with the intention of diversifying our workforce to better reflect the city we serve. More colleagues with disabilities or long-term health conditions or from minority ethnic backgrounds in more senior positions will have a positive impact on the pay gaps for both groups. Both pilots will commence within the 2024/2025 action plan.

- 4.5 As a result of the work we have undertaken to date, our understanding of the key issues has deepened and this has helped shape our thinking about our priorities for the next few years. We've undertaken extensive engagement with key stakeholders to seek their views on what matters most to them in relation to equalities, diversity and inclusion. We've heard from colleague networks, trade unions, elected members, external specialist organisations and front-line workers as part of this engagement. We've taken account of the experiences and views of minority ethnic colleagues from the reverse mentoring programme.
- 4.6 In addition to insight from pay gap data and stakeholder engagement, we've taken account of the priorities in our new People Strategy and Workforce Plan, emerging findings from the Scottish Census outputs and feedback from benchmarking activity with external partners. We've developed productive working relationships with our external partners such as Stonewall, Disability Confident and Close the Gap. The guidance and advice we've received from partners has contributed to the development of our Workforce EDI Strategy for 2024-2028.

- 4.7 We're committed to employing a workforce that reflects the city it serves; a workforce which recognises and values the benefits a diverse whole-council team can bring to workplace culture and delivery of services to the citizens of Edinburgh. We need our people to feel well supported at their work, free from fear of discriminatory or otherwise unacceptable behaviour and to be skilled and confident to deliver services in an inclusive and culturally sensitive manner.
- 4.8 We want to build on the good progress to date in creating and maintaining an inclusive workplace culture where people feel welcome, valued and respected at work irrespective of their background or lived experience. This extends beyond protected characteristics like ethnicity and religion or belief to include other groups who are potentially marginalised due to socio-economic background, caring responsibilities or experience of growing up in the care system.
- 4.9 As such, we have identified three strategic themes within the **Workforce Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (2024-2028)** to direct our activity over the next four years:
 - 4.9.1 **Theme 1 - Addressing barriers to participation** – We'll identify, address and remove barriers to representation to ensure we meet the needs of diverse groups at each stage of the employee lifecycle and create a workforce that reflects the population of the city of Edinburgh. This will include consideration of the ways in which we work and recognition of the impact that lived experience has on individual's experience of working life. It will also reflect our commitments around becoming an anti-racist organisation including increased representation of colleagues of colour in senior roles and positions of influence.
 - 4.9.2 **Theme 2 - Protecting our colleagues and building resilience** – We'll look at how we can enhance our support for all colleagues, and front-line workers in particular, to ensure they feel well supported and safe when carrying out their duties. This will include working with managers to enable them to provide appropriate support for colleagues, setting out clearly our expectations of colleagues and service users in line with Our Behaviours and taking steps to address and challenge unacceptable behaviours in a positive way to reduce harm. We'll work to ensure all colleagues have an understanding what constitutes discriminatory behaviour and how we should respond to it as colleagues and managers, including what an anti-racist approach looks and feels like in the workplace.
 - 4.9.3 **Theme 3 - Ensuring inclusive workplaces** – We'll endeavour to create a working environment where all colleagues feel welcomed, valued, respected and have a sense of belonging to the wider council team. This will include looking at how we attract and recruit new colleagues, how we can work flexibly to support the changing needs of a diverse workforce and how we can continue to raise awareness for all about the importance of equality, respect and dignity in the

workplace. We recognise that traditional methods of recruitment and assessment may present unintended barriers for particular groups such as neurodivergent candidates. We'll use this understanding, along with analysis of recruitment stage data, to identify where the barriers lie and work to remove or reduce barriers throughout the process.

4.9.4 The refreshed EDI Strategy will be underpinned by annual action plans the progress of which will be monitored through data based KPIs and employee feedback and experience.

5. Next Steps

5.1 If approved, annual progress updates on the Workforce EDI Strategy 2024-2028 will be taken to Finance and Resources Committee with a full report on the lifespan of the strategy and proposals for next steps to be brought back to Policy and Sustainability Committee in October 2028.

6. Financial impact

6.1 N/A

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

7.1 The IIA for this strategy has been completed and published.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

8.1 N/A

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

9.1 In developing this report we have engaged with and reviewed best practice of external organisations and groups, including other Scottish local authorities, UK Government, Society of Personnel Development Scotland (SPDS), Close the Gap, Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (CRER), Employers Network for Equalities and Inclusion (ENEI), Stonewall and Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC).

10. Background reading/external references

10.1 [Diversity and Inclusion Strategy – October 2019](#)
10.2 [Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Update – October 2020](#)
10.3 [Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Update – October 2021](#)
10.4 [Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Update – November 2022](#)
10.5 [Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Update – October 2023](#)
10.6 <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/directory-record/1656936/workforce-equality-diversity-inclusion-strategy-2024-to-2028>

11. Appendices

11.1 Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2028.



Our Workforce Equality,

Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

2024 - 2028



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Foreword from our Chief Executive

I'm pleased to introduce this new Workforce Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy which builds on the progress we've made over the last 5 years – progressing towards a working environment where every one of our colleagues has an equal voice and where we work together to prevent discrimination of any kind that is based on who you are or appear to be. This includes age, disability status, ethnicity, faith, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation or socio-economic background.

We've made good progress in developing inclusive policies, establishing and supporting our colleague networks, improving our data collection, providing face to face and digital EDI learning and understanding and introducing initiatives such as our first Reverse Mentoring Programme. We also recognise that we still have more work to do.

The population of Edinburgh has grown by 9.1% in the decade to 2021 and within the overall growth has seen significant changes. Some of the census data from 2022 is still to be published and yet we already see from the available data that our workforce has not changed at the same pace. We want our workforce to reflect the diversity of the city and that at work they feel recognised, respected, included and involved. This 4-year strategy has been developed to progress these aims.

Our people and their passion for what they do for our citizens every day are our greatest asset and we remain committed to creating the working environment our people deserve.

*Paul Lawrence
Chief Executive*



Why it's important we have a Workforce EDI Strategy

We employ more than 19,000 people delivering over 700 services to the residents of Edinburgh and supporting our colleagues to keep our city running efficiently and effectively.

Most of our colleagues deliver frontline services and interact with service users and members of the public on a daily basis.

Edinburgh has a diverse population, representing a wide range of backgrounds, cultures and experiences. It's vital that our colleagues understand, and are geared up to respond effectively to, the needs of the diverse communities we serve.

The same applies within our workforce, so that our interactions with each other support and encourage an inclusive work environment.

Our organisational culture is driven by Our Behaviours of respect, integrity and flexibility and we're committed to creating a workplace:

- that's open, positive, inclusive and safe for all
- that supports and allows everyone to be their best self and do their best work
- that celebrates the benefits of our diversity
- where everyone feels trusted, valued and recognised for their contribution
- where people feel safe and able to raise concerns and potential risks knowing that they will be responded to fairly and effectively.

How we've developed our Workforce EDI Strategy

This strategy has been developed following engagement and consultation with a wide range of people, including:

- frontline workers
- colleague networks
- trade unions
- elected members
- partner agencies
- internal stakeholders

It's been further informed by a review of the outputs from the lifespan of the previous strategy (2019-2024) and associated actions plans. We've also taken account of current best practice in other organisations such as CIPD, Police Scotland, further and higher education institutions and other Scottish local authorities.

We've engaged extensively with our frontline colleagues in the development of this strategy to identify what is most important to them day to day in their jobs and what support we can provide as an employer to make our Council a great place to work where everyone feels safe, valued and respected.

“

It's important that we are being asked for our views because we are the ones who are out there, in people's houses, dealing with the public and sometimes you can feel like nobody understands how difficult our jobs can be. We need support from our managers so it's good they are asking and listening. ”

Frontline colleague

Examples of key themes from the engagement include the need for consistent support from managers across services, the need for a better understanding of inclusive language and practice, and recognition of the challenges faced by colleagues delivering services direct to the public.

Data is a strong driver in all our equalities, diversity and inclusion work and we've used insight gathered at local, national and inter-authority level to shape our strategic priorities including recruitment data, workforce profile data and analysis of our gender, disability and ethnicity pay gaps.

EDI Strategy themes and approach

Our EDI Strategy reflects the aspirations set out in our People Strategy and is underpinned by Our Behaviours.

There are three inter-related strategic themes:

- Addressing barriers to participation
- Protecting colleagues and building resilience
- Ensuring inclusive workplaces



These themes will form the basis of an action plan that will be measured through our KPIs and refreshed on an annual basis. Progress will be reported to the Finance and Resources Committee each year, with workforce dashboards considered by Finance and Resources Committee each quarter.

How we will do this

How we work to deliver this strategy is as important as the strategic direction it is setting. We're committed to:

- **Listening to colleagues**, managers, colleague networks and our trade unions to strengthen employee 'voice'
- **Supporting managers** to develop the skills and confidence to deliver our EDI agenda with conviction and compassion. We'll do this whilst ensuring that managers are also supported to take care of their own wellbeing.
- **Engaging with partner agencies** and subject-matter experts to inform our actions
- **Communicating clearly** with colleagues, managers, service users and members of the public about our EDI expectations and aspirations. We'll use a variety of communication methods to make sure we reach all of our colleagues.
- **Recognising the impact of 'intersectionality'** - how different aspects of a person's identity, such as race and sex, or disability and sexual orientation can combine to affect people's experiences and can create greater advantage or disadvantage in the workplace. We'll use this understanding to shape our approach
- **Using our data** to inform our decisions.

Addressing barriers to representation

We'll identify, address and remove barriers to representation to ensure we meet the needs of diverse groups at each stage of the employee lifecycle and create a workforce that reflects the city of Edinburgh.

We'll take actions in line with Scottish Government legislation to support this work including *A Fairer Scotland for All – Anti-Racist Employment Strategy* and *A Fairer Scotland for All – Disabled People Employment Strategy*.

How we will do this

Taking data-driven decisions

We'll use a variety of data sources to inform where our priorities lie and where we can target our resources most effectively. We'll continue to use external benchmarking to track progress against key objectives and seek to improve our collection of equalities data from colleagues.

Adopting an anti-racist approach

We'll develop and implement an anti-racism action plan at a council-wide level to address issues identified through our reverse mentoring programme. We'll offer anti-racist learning to all colleagues and encourage engagement in discussion to raise awareness about racism, its origins, its manifestation in everyday life and how colleagues can support each other as effective allies.

Promoting reasonable adjustments

We'll ensure colleagues, managers, and prospective candidates are aware of our approach to reasonable adjustments and assistive technologies. We'll go beyond our statutory requirements to adopt a flexible and inclusive approach in our employment practices. We'll raise awareness about visible and invisible disabilities and long-term health conditions to ensure everyone knows what help and



support they can, and should, expect from us. We'll ensure that our managers are well skilled and confident to offer the best level of support based on individual need not just during recruitment but throughout the employee lifecycle.

Supporting flexible and part-time working

We'll set out our commitment to flexible and part-time working in our job adverts and in our employment practices. We'll encourage managers to support flexible working arrangements where possible

to create conditions where all colleagues can participate at their best in the workplace.

Recognising carer commitments and care experience

We'll review our processes and practices to ensure we recognise and address the needs of colleagues and candidates who have carer commitments or who have experience being brought up in the care system. We'll work to remove barriers to full participation in working life and provide support where possible to enable positive experiences for all recruitment, development and progression within the organisation.

“

To me, recognising barriers in the first place shows that we recognise and celebrate the diversity of our workforce and by addressing those barriers, we demonstrate our commitment to celebrating this diversity. When we eradicate barriers to representation, representation becomes more equitable, meaning better working conditions for everyone and better outcomes for the people of Edinburgh. After all, they're who we are here for! ”

Colleague network member

Implementing more innovative recruitment strategies

We'll examine our workforce data to understand potential barriers and take innovative decisions to attract the most diverse candidate pool for our jobs. We'll use positive action measures, where we can, to address occupational segregation and under-representation. We'll work in partnership with key stakeholders to develop productive relationships with under-represented communities including younger people, people who are experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, people from minority ethnic backgrounds and people with disabilities or long-term health conditions.

Developing our understanding of barriers to progression

We'll increase our understanding of the barriers to progression that are experienced by under-represented groups and work to reduce and remove these barriers where we find them at City of Edinburgh Council. We recognise the clear links between job satisfaction, career progression and positive workplace wellbeing and will work to ensure this is reflected in our wider wellbeing and career progression initiatives.

Making best use of pay gap data

We'll use pay gap data to identify improvements to our ways of working which will not only improve the pay gap but will remove barriers to participation and representation across the workforce. We'll work with other Scottish local authorities to ensure consistency of approach in pay gap reporting to enable robust and insightful comparisons to be made at national and inter-authority level.

Ensuring the diverse needs of colleagues are met

We'll work with our colleague network for disabilities and long-term health conditions (SPARC) to tackle the biggest challenges faced at work including recruitment, progression and reasonable adjustments. We'll build connections with our local partners to improve disability inclusion and continue to offer tailored learning opportunities for managers and colleagues. Our work will be informed by Disability Confident.

We'll work with our interfaith colleague network (SHINE) and local partners to identify ways in which we can support colleagues in workplace and promote tolerance and understanding across marginalised groups.

Protecting colleagues and building resilience

Our colleagues are delivering services in often challenging circumstances. We're committed to supporting them as an employer.

When colleagues encounter unacceptable behaviour in the course of their work, we need them to know that we have their back and that our people leaders are well skilled and supported to step up and navigate these challenges effectively.



We understand that, given the nature of our services, interactions at work can be difficult but we will not tolerate discriminatory or otherwise unacceptable treatment of our colleagues.

How we will do this

Developing our leaders

We'll work with our people leaders to understand the challenges their teams face and provide appropriate training and support to ensure they are well prepared to meet the challenges head on, in an inclusive and supportive manner.

Promoting equality of opportunity for women

We'll work in partnership with specialist agencies to improve understanding among colleagues about what violence against women is and how it contributes to women's inequality in the workplace. We'll promote policies and practice designed to address issues such as sexual harassment, discriminatory workplace practice and lack of career development. We'll implement separate policy and guidance for harassment relating to sex.

Challenging unacceptable behaviour

We'll ensure our people leaders have the skills and experience to offer positive support to colleagues who find themselves the subject of discriminatory or otherwise unacceptable behaviour. We'll offer active bystander training for colleagues to enable them to speak up and challenge unacceptable behaviour when they see it at work. We'll support colleagues to become active allies to under-represented or marginalised communities. We'll use our policy framework and clear communications to ensure colleagues and managers understand that discriminatory behaviour will not be tolerated.

Supporting frontline workers

We'll provide enhanced support to frontline workers who are at a higher risk of encountering discriminatory or otherwise unacceptable behaviour in the course of their employment with us.

We recognise the additional risk to colleagues who share a protected characteristic or who are from a minority group in terms of lone working or working with challenging service users. We'll work with teams to build resilience and develop strategies to ensure no colleague feels isolated or unsupported at work. We'll ensure clear links are drawn between this work and the work contained within our wellbeing strategy.

“

It's important to me to know that my employer is proactively and regularly managing safety of all. We all react differently to aggression and intimidation, and it's important that all colleagues are heard and seen when raising a matter they're personally affected by, and that all colleagues are supported if they experience workplace trauma. ”

Colleague network member

Protecting our colleagues from bullying and harassment

We'll make clear in policy, guidance and communication how to disclose unacceptable behaviour experienced while working.

We'll review and revise our approach to recording and reporting unacceptable behaviour to ensure clarity for all colleagues about the appropriate channels to use, and for what purpose.

Ensuring inclusive workplaces

A working environment where all colleagues feel welcomed, valued, respected and have a sense of belonging to an organisation where they can be themselves without fear of discrimination or exclusion is fundamental to our EDI approach.

Building inclusive workplaces will help us to attract and retain people from different backgrounds that reflect the population of Edinburgh. It will help us find the right mix of skills, experience and perspectives needed to improve decision-making, service delivery and to better meet the needs of the citizens we serve.

Having more inclusive workplaces will also help us listen to the lived experience of under-represented communities and to respond to their needs more effectively. It will help us to become an employer of choice where perhaps we have not been seen as an attractive option. When we work together in an inclusive environment, we'll be better placed to deliver services both internally and externally.

How we will do this

Promoting a culture of learning and development

We'll equip our colleagues with the knowledge and confidence to promote a culture of inclusion within our organisation and with our service users and partners.

Learning will be developed to promote a workplace environment where racism, ageism, sexism, islamophobia, anti-LGBTQ+ prejudice and ableism, including micro-aggressions, are understood and not tolerated. We'll prioritise face to face learning wherever we can to create the best learning experience for colleagues.

Engaging with stakeholders and key partners

We'll consult, engage and work with partner organisations, trade unions, colleague network and third-party experts to gather information and lived experience perspectives which will inform our approach to building better and more inclusive workplaces.

We'll seek out the views of the most under-represented groups to identify where we can make improvements to address their needs.

“

Without inclusion, our workplace will never be able to support and retain our diverse workforce. A diverse workforce is the only way to represent the diverse population of Edinburgh that we are serving. If we want the best outcomes for the people of our city, we need to make sure that we are an inclusive workplace. ”

Colleague network member



Driving improvement through external benchmarking

We'll work with subject-matter experts to evaluate how well we are doing as an organisation and how well we measure up against other similar organisations.

We'll engage with organisations who can assist us specifically to improve our offering for colleagues including those with long-term health conditions or disabilities, colleagues from ethnic minority backgrounds and colleagues from the LGBT+ community.

Delivering services with cultural competence

We'll work with frontline colleagues to ensure they feel well placed to deliver services in a culturally sensitive and inclusive manner. We'll engage with community groups as key stakeholders and provide learning for colleagues to support this work as appropriate.

We'll take action in line with any recommendations made by Scottish Government regarding economic, social and cultural rights legislation.

Developing employee voice and our colleague networks

We'll continue to work closely with our colleague networks and trade union partners to ensure the views of colleagues are heard and are reflected in the development of our EDI policy and practice.

We'll take steps to strengthen employee voice by seeking the views of colleagues in other ways including, but not limited to, surveys, focus groups, IIAs and stakeholder engagement sessions on specific topics.

Providing clear and visible communication

We'll set out our clear commitment to supporting colleagues and managers to work together and to deliver services in an inclusive and respectful manner. We'll reflect our behaviours of respect, integrity and flexibility in all our communications.

We'll be clear in our external communications that our aim is to reflect the population of Edinburgh across our workforce. We'll adopt a range of communications methods to ensure that all colleagues are made aware of our commitments.

Implementing and measuring the effectiveness of our Workforce EDI Strategy

Securing equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace is a collective responsibility and achieving the goals set out in this strategy requires the engagement and effort of everyone. All colleagues are expected to demonstrate Our Behaviours to help create an inclusive working environment.

As part of our broader People Strategy, the success of our EDI efforts will be measured to ensure they make a noticeable difference and positively impact our colleagues. Here are the key methods we will use to record, monitor and report our progress.

Annual EDI dashboard

Our annual equality dashboard will provide a baseline from which to track progress against key workforce metrics. This will allow us to measure our impact and make informed decisions about areas needing improvement.

Reporting to committee

Progress will be reported to the Policy and Sustainability Committee in October each year, including updates on chartermarks and benchmarking tools. Workforce dashboards will be presented to the Finance and Resources committee each quarter for consideration.

Benchmarking activity

We'll engage in benchmarking with specialist organisations, including Employers Network for Equalities and Inclusion, Stonewall, Disability Confident, Carer Positive, Autistica, Race Equality Matters, Equally Safe at Work and Mindful Employer.

This will involve collaborating with subject matter experts to adopt best practices and compare our performance against industry standards.



Summary: our commitment and priority plans for 2024-28

Addressing barriers to representation

- Taking data-driven decisions
- Adopting an anti-racist approach
- Promoting reasonable adjustments
- Supporting flexible and part-time working
- Recognising carer commitments and care experience
- Implementing more innovative recruitment strategies
- Developing our understanding of barriers to progression
- Making best use of pay gap data
- Ensuring the diverse needs of colleagues are met

Protecting our colleagues and building resilience

- Developing our leaders
- Promoting equality of opportunity for women
- Challenging unacceptable behaviour
- Supporting frontline workers
- Protecting our colleagues from bullying and harassment

Ensuring an inclusive workplace

- Promoting a culture of learning and development
- Engaging with stakeholders and key partners
- Developing employee voice and our colleague networks
- Providing clear and visible communication
- Driving improvement through external benchmarking
- Delivering services with cultural competence

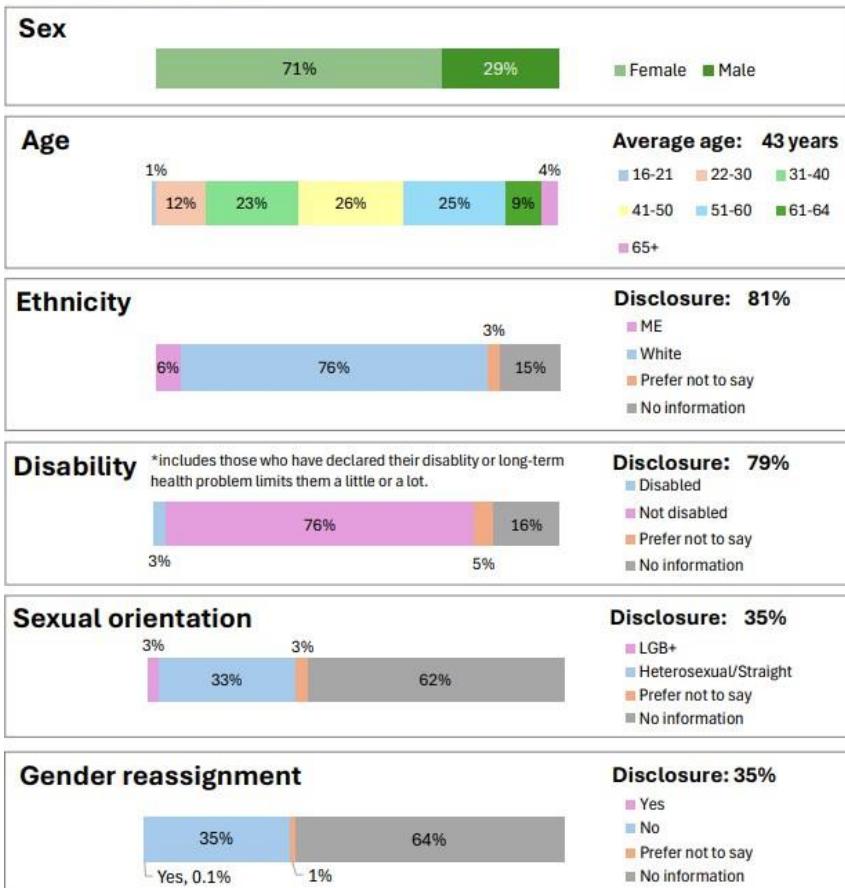
Council workforce and Edinburgh working age community profiles

Council workforce: **19,776**
(Headcount)

•EDINBURGH•
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

Reflects data for the City of Edinburgh Council workforce, at 31 March 2024.

Council workforce



Edinburgh working age community: **357,563**
(Headcount)

Reflects data for those over 16 years of age and under 65 years of age.

Edinburgh working age community

