



City of Westminster

# EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION WORKFORCE STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2022-2025



Inclusion and fairness in the workplace is not just the right thing to do, it's the smart thing to do.

## OUR VISION

To create a great, fair and inclusive place to work where everyone is valued for their unique talent, empowered to lead in their role and can be their authentic selves.



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For us, diversity means having a mix of people that represent our communities, bringing their own unique skills and talent and experience. Inclusion is having a sense of belonging and ability to contribute, and be appreciated for the uniqueness our people to enhance the performance of the organisation.

At Westminster City Council (WCC), we are committed to being an inclusive employer, ensuring that everyone has equal opportunity. Having a workforce, where everyone feels valued and respected because of their difference, and a place where every employee can be themselves so that they can thrive and grow. It is by embracing our differences and bringing new perspectives that enables us to have richer conversations and be innovative. We want to create a Fairer Westminster and ensure that we listen and respond and meet the needs of our communities.

Diversity and inclusion is a top priority for the Council and whilst we have made significant progress we are not complacent and recognise that we need to accelerate our pace of change. It is essential that it becomes part of the structures, behaviours, and culture of our organisation. Our Equalities agenda is so important both internally and externally and that is why we require the commitment of every employee to understand what we want to achieve, and it is vital that we work together to take action.

Last year, we appointed a Strategic Diversity and Inclusion Partner and we have used the learning from our work with them to develop our 3-year strategic action plan to inform what we do and how we do it to make it bring about systemic change.



## AS AN ORGANISATION THIS STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN WILL SUPPORT US IN:

- ▶ Reducing our pay gaps over time.
- ▶ Increasing diversity across our workforce particularly at senior leadership level so that we are representative of the communities we serve.
- ▶ Being accountable, ensuring that Senior Leadership and People Leaders drive and lead the change that enable diversity and embed inclusive practices across the organisation.
- ▶ Reviewing progress made against our strategic action plan.
- ▶ Actively championing inclusion across the organisation through the stories we tell, voices we amplify and through the range of engagement with staff.
- ▶ Being innovative and outward looking, both being thought leaders ourselves and learning from best practice elsewhere.
- ▶ Ensuring that staff feel that the Council is a safe and good place to work.

We recognise that change takes time. Diversity and inclusion is a long-term commitment, and we will hold ourselves accountable for ensuring that we see the change we want and need.

**Stuart Love**  
Chief Executive



# OUR 3 - YEAR EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

This action plan was developed in partnership with our world class strategic partner Vercida. It is informed by WCC data, external best practice and in-depth consultation and engagement with more than 500 staff and key stakeholders within Westminster City Council. In essence this plan brings the strategy to life by providing a roadmap of what we will do, when, who will lead the activity and how we will measure success.

As signatories of the Race at Work Charter, launched by Business in the Community (BITC), we have used the framework in developing our call to action and the focus of our initial work has been to address Global Majority groups disparities in the workplace, who are underrepresented at senior levels and have the biggest pay gaps. Our focus on this target group will remain our priority. Alongside this work we will continue to ensure that we work to support diversity and inclusion across all protected characteristics, as outlined in our strategic action plan.



# OUR PROGRESS

This action plan will build on our existing activities and initiatives, and this has included:

- Taking action to increase the diversity of our senior leadership by implementing our Positive Action policy. This has increased representation of women from 30% to 45% and Global Majority staff from 4% to 26% over the past 5 years.
- We are increasingly attracting Global Majority staff to the organisation. Since the ethnicity pay gap was first measured in Q4, 2017-18, the numbers of Global Majority staff have increased by 507 in 2017/18 to 1017.
- We created a new recruitment brand 'Be all kinds of Extraordinary' to help us attract the very best and most diverse talents for the organisation.
- Ensuring our Executive Leadership Team are engaged on the recruitment panel of all Senior Leaders appointments.
- Reviewed our job descriptions and produced recruitment resources following feedback from our Staff Networks.
- Mandatory inclusive recruitment training and unconscious bias training for all hiring managers and those staff participating on inclusive recruitment panels. 1,222 people have now attended these courses.
- Inclusive Recruitments Panels for all appointments.
- Established a Pay Gap Taskforce and regularly publishing and reviewing our pay gap data.
- Talent management programmes which have provided development opportunities for staff and a keen focus on inclusion and equality of opportunity.



- Implemented an Inclusive Mentoring Scheme to build genuine awareness of the lived experience of colleagues with a different protected characteristic. 50 people are actively engaged in the new programme.
- Initiated a programme around health and well-being enabling staff to talk more about their own well-being.
- We have memberships with 6 Diversity and Inclusion partners covering all aspects of equality and inclusion in our workplace. We also appointed a diversity and inclusion strategic partner to help us professionalise our approach and to help us address our pay gaps.
- Six Staff Networks; Able, Family Loop, Rainbow, Global Majority, Multi-Faith and Women, initiated by our employees. Over 900 people are now members of a network.
- To improve the diversity and inclusion culture change we regularly engaged across the organisation to enable staff to share perspectives and experiences through our networks, weekly Loop Live sessions, focus groups. We have over 45 Diversity and Inclusion champions and Diversity and Inclusion leads across each directorate.



# WHY EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION MATTERS



The council is fully committed to the vision, values and ethos of the Equality Act 2010 and to fulfilling the three elements of the general equality duty as defined in the Act:

1. Elimination of unlawful discrimination
2. Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
3. Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy, maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage/civil partnership

Our approach goes beyond the compliance obligations and creating an equal, diverse and inclusion organisation will help us better respond to our workforce and serve our communities. So, inclusion means for us:



# MAINSTREAMING EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The 3-year action plan will help drive forward our agenda and help us to integrate equality into the day to day working of the organisation, considering equality as part of everything we do.

The action plan is split into 4 themes:



These themes support the Council's commitment to the Race at Work Charter steps:

Sponsorship



Capture ethnicity data and publicise progress



Make clear that supporting equality in the workplace is the responsibility of all leaders and managers



Take action that supports ethnic minority career progression



Driving D&I culture change



Increasing our procurement from locally diverse-led businesses

## HOLDING OURSELVES ACCOUNTABLE

Our Executive Leadership Team (ELT) are fully committed to the Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Strategy and action plan and will continue to drive forward this agenda. We know that localised diversity and inclusion action plans are ensuring that our senior leaders are taking accountability and playing their part to ensure that we maintain total focus as an organisation and can measure our progress.

However, we have decided in order to continue making meaningful change we will implement new diversity and inclusion performance goals setting out clearly the responsibilities of Senior Leadership and People leaders to enable diversity and embed inclusive practices both internally and externally. This approach will help our leaders to set out their commitment and the work they have done to support D&I priorities in a consistent and transparent way.

We will ensure regular reviewing of progress against the action plan providing updates to ELT and across the organisation.

Publishing and reviewing our diversity data will be key and measuring our success and any learnings and further initiatives required to make a difference. Annually we publish our pay gaps: Gender, Ethnicity and Disability and our aim is to also publish pay gaps for sexual orientation.



## EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT

We have developed a range of initiatives to improve our recruitment figures and to ensure that we are an employer of choice, but we want to ensure that we have a diverse workforce across all levels.

We want everyone to see and feel that there are career progression opportunities for all employees and that there are various career pathways and support to achieve this. We want to continue to recognise ability and skills and encourage recruitment on hiring for potential to support career development

We have already had some success with our Positive Action policy and supported recruitment, and we will consider expanding this across the bands where greater representation is required.

We will continue to support hiring managers through our recruitment resources, and we want to ensure that we continue to recruit staff with the right mindset and behaviours. Therefore we will provide further guidance on interview questions in line with our behaviours and values.

To make disability a priority we will ensure that our Inclusive Recruitment panels are diverse to include disabled representation where possible.





## AMBITIOUS ACTIONS TO DRIVE EQUITY

We are committed to ensuring that everyone has access to the same opportunities and career progression, and it is important to take firm action to address those inequalities to close those gaps.

Tackling our pay gaps is vital and to accelerate our pace of change, we established a D&I Pay Gap Taskforce, that worked directly with senior leaders and teams where the greatest challenges exist, and interventions are required. We know that our pay gaps are heading in the right direction, but we know that there is more work required.

We will encourage our Senior Leaders to review, and monitor pay particularly for Global Majority and female employees to be equal to white and male employees, particularly for those in the lower steps of the pay bands.

We want to build an external brand as a EDI thought leader by developing bold and innovative initiatives grounded in research and evidence-based, sharing our learning with others.



## ENGAGING EVERYONE IN DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We have developed a range of initiatives and activities to engage the whole organisation to build commitment and ownership to embed and drive forward our EDI change. Feedback from staff engagement suggests whilst change is being felt throughout the organisation, there is a need to ensure that all leaders create safe working environments for staff to fully be themselves.

We have a zero-tolerance towards bullying and harassment, and we want to ensure that definitions of expected behaviours are clear for all staff. Our People Strategy, The Westminster Way reinforces our commitment to be a respectful and inclusive organisation and we will make clear the behaviours linked to our Westminster Way.

Our focus will be to implement an inclusive leadership approach through training, support, coaching and role modelling behaviours to deliver inclusive working environments.

We have six incredible staff networks, and we will continue to support their work, increase membership and visibility. We will also showcase the work and engagement of our D&I leads, Champions and all work led by employees to embed and drive forward our EDI priorities.

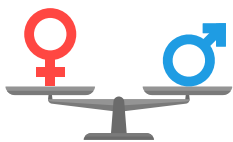


# KEY MEASURES

The action plan is front-loaded: there are more actions in year 1 than for years 2 and 3 combined. We expect this to rebalance and redistribute as the plan progresses, learning takes place and detailed activities identified. The effectiveness and achievements of our priorities for diversity and inclusion will be reviewed and reported quarterly to our ELT.



We will baseline and review progress each year against the following core measurements:



Close all pay gaps by 2025.



By the end of 2025 we will be representative of the communities we serve at all levels in the organisation.



Continue to increase the number of Global Majority and women in the Senior Leadership Team (currently 45% and 26% respectively) 58% of women and 40% of Global Majority employees in senior leadership roles by 2025.



An increase of 3% in the Our Voice survey, of staff reporting that they feel "optimistic about career development".



A 3% overall increase in employees reporting the council is a great place to work.



A 3% increase in the numbers of employees declaring their protected characteristics. By 2025, we will have 93% staff sharing their personal data.

In addition to our core baseline measures for year 1 which we will measure year on year, we will also want to measure additional actions listed against each theme (Appendix 1).

We will undertake regular qualitative assessment of our progress. We will also undertake quantitative assessments of the impact of the strategic action based on employee perceptions and experience of the culture of the organisation. The outcome of the evaluation and review will also guide the development of further actions.

## THEME 1: HOLDING OURSELVES ACCOUNTABLE

YEAR 1	LEAD
1. Introduce Diversity and Inclusion Key Performance Indicators for Senior Leaders and review in their performance and developmental seasonal conversations. These will play a key role in performance management and calibration of senior leaders	- Diversity and Inclusion Team to launch - Executive Leadership Team to lead and hold Band 5, 6, 7 to account
2. Encourage Senior Leaders to set out what they have done in support of D&I priorities	Band 5, 6, 7
3. Undertake a quarterly audit to track turnover and employee experience covering reasons for leaving and experience of joining the organisation	Organisational Development / Diversity and Inclusion Team
4. Report on progress against D&I actions and wider business activity annually	Diversity and Inclusion Team
5. Take proactive steps to ensure key dashboard data is made available for all employees and leaders for transparency	Executive Leadership Team to ensure covered at all team meetings
6. Analyse the impact and outcomes of interventions from an intersectional perspective and by individual characteristics	Human Resources Operations
7. Continue to undertake targeted data collection campaigns to encourage all employees to complete their diversity data, particularly those who identify as LGBTQ+	Diversity and Inclusion Team
8. Make disability inclusion a priority by setting targets for the percentage of employees with disabilities in the workforce, and their progression and promotion	Executive Leadership Team
9. Launch new Inclusive Mentoring Scheme	Diversity and Inclusion Team
10. Launch a EDI Toolkit	Diversity and Inclusion Team
YEAR 2	LEAD
1. ELT D&I champion to scrutinise ELT decisions and produce report card	Director of People Service
2. Design and implement clear career opportunities for employees in Bands 1-4	Heads of Service
3. Publish pay gap data for sexual orientation.	Diversity and Inclusion Team
YEAR 3	LEAD
1. Review annual reporting on D&I including data metrics against the plan	Executive Leadership Team
2. Have a workforce that represents our community at all levels	Executive Leadership Team
3. Our senior leaders (band 5 and above) profile reflects our communities by 100%, on Global Majority and Gender	Executive Leadership Team



## THEME 2: EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT

YEAR 1	LEAD
1. Expand the scope of Positive Action hiring for gender/ethnicity to pay bands where there is under-representation	Executive Leadership Team
2. Provide guidance to Hiring Managers on interview questions to align with our values and behaviours	Human Resources Business Partners /Recruitment
3. Communicate pay and steps for internal roles	Hiring managers
4. Encourage People Leaders to support part-time and flexible working employees	Executive Leadership Team / Heads of service
5. Research into guaranteed interviews for residents who meet minimum requirements for a role and can provide proof of residency	Recruitment / Organisational Development
YEAR 2	LEAD
1. Take pro-active steps to utilise the “tie-break” in the Equalities Act 2010 that allows the appointment of diverse candidates where there are two candidates of equivalent merit and under-representation can be shown	Recruitment
2. Focus recruitment on hiring for potential, giving talented candidates the opportunity to develop	Recruitment to provide refreshed guidance
3. Set out clear expectations about the organisation’s approach to starting salaries and negotiation	Executive Leadership Team
4. Ensure recruitment panels are diverse to include disabled representation where possible	Recruitment
YEAR 3	LEAD
1. Evaluate the recruitment process at each stage to learn what makes the most impact and to provide assurance of D&I best practice	Recruitment
2. Review our cultural D&I actions to ensure they are still fit for purpose and correct with modern thinking and ideas	Human Resources Senior Leadership Team
3. Use the latest tools and techniques to continue attracting a diverse candidate list, ensuring we are reaching our communities	Human Resources Senior Leadership Team

## THEME 3: AMBITIOUS ACTIONS TO DRIVE EQUITY

YEAR 1	LEAD
1. Senior Leaders to be accountable and to consider increasing the pay of Global Majority and female employees to be equal to white and male employees, particularly in the lower steps of the pay bands	Executive Leadership Team
2. Continue to work with Strategy and Intelligence to conduct financial modelling to address our pay gaps	Human Resources Operations
3. Use learning from the Pay Gap Taskforce & Forum to reduce pay gaps across the business	Executive Leadership Team
4. Refresh the Talent Management scheme to support career progression	Organisational Development
YEAR 2	LEAD
Build an external brand as a D&I thought leader by developing bold and innovative initiatives grounded in research and evidence-based	Diversity and Inclusion Team
YEAR 3	LEAD
1. Continue to collaborate with other organisations to share best practice and drive broader change.	Human Resources Senior Leadership Team
2. Close all pay gaps by 2025	Executive Leadership Team
3. Evaluate the success of the talent management schemes against target sets	Organisational Development
4. Review Reward approach to ensure remuneration is in line with a 2025 workforce, focussing on addressing any inequalities	Human Resources Senior Leadership Team

## THEME 4: ENGAGING EVERYONE IN DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION








YEAR 1	LEAD
1. Create a zero-tolerance structure/approach to reprisals for speaking up with clear definitions of expected behaviours for all	Executive Leadership Team
2. Target interventions on Safe to Speak up using our Voice Survey	Diversity and Inclusion Team
3. Clearly define the inclusive behaviours expected for each of the three pillars of The Westminster Way and communicate the expected behaviours to all levels of WCC	Organisational Development
4. Ask senior leaders to role model inclusive behaviours at all times, and provide some definitions which are not prescriptive	Executive Leadership Team/Organisational Development
5. Strengthen people leaders' skills by providing training on teaming and leading inclusively and creating high performing teams	Organisational Development
6. Ensure that messaging and communications reach all areas of WCC not just those who are already engaged. Showcase the work of all D&I initiatives across the Council and externally	Communications / Executive Leadership Team
7. Support the staff networks to increase membership and visibility setting out their priorities and showcasing their work	Diversity and Inclusion Team
8. Identify ways to encourage staff to participate in specific activities or projects	Diversity and Inclusion Team
YEAR 2/3	LEAD
1. Work with the Communities Team to support the wider Equalities agenda for our communities	Diversity and Inclusion Team
2. Assess the impact of the Inclusive leadership programme for People Leaders	Organisational Development






# HOW WE WILL MEASURE OUR SUCCESS

In addition to our core baseline measures for year 1 which we will measure year on year, we will also want to measure the following:

## THEME 1: HOLDING OURSELVES ACCOUNTABLE YEAR 2 SUCCESS MEASURES

-  2% increase in the number of staff reporting that they trust and respect senior leaders at the Council
-  Clear career opportunities available within each Directorate measured by job opportunities on IBC and through the acting up process
-  Continue to have representation from under-represented groups on the talent development schemes across each band. The number of places available need to at least match and ideally be greater than the split of the workforce
-  Increased opportunities for all employees particularly part-time workers and job-sharing employees
-  Increase number of employees declaring a disability recruited
-  Undertake an audit through qualitative and quantitative tools to understand employment opportunities for staff with disability and provide interventions where required
-  Full Pay gap information is published for staff self-identified with a disability

## THEME 2: ELEVATING THE IMPACT OF INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT YEAR 2 SUCCESS MEASURES

-  100% hiring managers and staff on Inclusive Recruitment panels have attended mandatory training
-  All recruitment panels for Band 3+ are diverse with wider representation across the organisation
-  Recruitment lunch and learn sessions well attended and received across the organisation

## THEME 3: AMBITIOUS ACTIONS TO DRIVE EQUITY

### YEAR 2 SUCCESS MEASURES

- ▲ 90% of new starters report in the Our Voice Survey that they have sufficient support to do their role
- ▲ Year on year increase in numbers of staff attending mentoring/coaching programmes

### YEAR 3 SUCCESS MEASURES

- ▲ 2% increase of parental leave by male employees
- ▲ 2% of staff reporting feeling happier with their working patterns

## THEME 4: ENGAGING EVERYONE IN DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

### YEAR 1 SUCCESS MEASURES

- ▲ 100% action taken by People and Senior leaders on “Speak Out” concerns
- ▲ 5% Increase in Our Voice Scores of employees feeling valued that the workplace is more inclusive
- ▲ 100% of People and Senior Leaders attending training on inclusive leadership

### YEAR 2 SUCCESS MEASURES

- ▲ Increase in positive participation in the staff networks through the number of staff joining
- ▲ Disability Confident Leader status retained and Level 3 by 2023 and Disability Smart audit by 2024

