

Workforce Equalities Statement

DRAFT VERSION

Author	Human Resources, Organisational Development and Transformation
Scope	<p>This policy applies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All employees of the Council and all employment practices <p>This policy does not apply to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schools staff, workers not directly employed by the Council.
Purpose	The purpose of this policy is to communicate the Council's stance on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in all its employment practices, and to provide all staff and managers with further information, support and resources on how we will achieve our EDI aims.
Approval	Personnel Committee 24 July 2024
Review	The policy will usually be reviewed every 3 years, but may be reviewed sooner if there are changes to legislation or statute; agreement of new national terms and conditions of service or Government Policy; organisational change; or resulting from changes agreed through Trade Union Consultation.

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DRAFT

1. Our vision

Our vision for Manchester as set out in the Our Manchester Strategy is for a fair and equitable city, where all our residents, regardless of their background, can aspire, succeed and live well.

Manchester has been at the forefront of championing equality and diversity for decades. We have an ongoing commitment to equality and making services, facilities, and opportunities fair and inclusive. Manchester is the home of the first public library, the first passenger railway, and the first football league. Manchester was home to the UK's first Black University lecturer and is also the birthplace of the suffragette movement, vegetarianism, and Vimto. Manchester is a city filled with boundless creativity, innovation, and culture.

We're nothing without our people, who have always dared to be different and think differently. After all, it's the people that make Manchester one of the greatest cities in the world. Our diversity has made us a successful, growing, connected, and buzzing city and it is important that our workforce – many of which are Manchester residents – reflects the rich diversity of our great city at all levels. Equally, we need to ensure that our services meet the needs of our increasingly diverse city and that we take action to address known inequalities for different people in our city.

The Council is one of the larger employers in Manchester with over 7,500 employees. This puts it in an ideal position to play a significant role in leading the way to ensuring everyone in society has opportunities available to them, is treated fairly and is made to feel like they belong.

Our Workforce Equality Strategy sets out our vision for the Council to be a place where our workforce fully reflects the rich diversity and talent of the communities we serve at all levels and is a place where everyone can be themselves and thrive.

2. Policy Aims

Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is at the heart of everything that we do at the Council. We want our workforce to reflect the diverse communities that we serve and to be a place where everyone feels safe, valued and respected.

This document is our commitment to you, our workforce, that we will protect, grow, and celebrate the diversity of our workforce, promote equality and inclusion in our workforce practices.

We also want you to play a part in advancing and embedding EDI. Every employee is responsible for acting in a way consistent with this policy statement, as well as the Employee Code of Conduct. Employees and managers should understand the aims and ambitions of this policy statement, and we will support you to understand your role through education and

learning. Every employee also shares the responsibility to recognise and if appropriate act on inappropriate or discriminatory behaviour.

This document sets out our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in employment and how we will ensure EDI is embedded in all of our employment practices which include recruitment, training, policies, performance, development, and terms and conditions.

You will find out about our flourishing staff networks on the intranet. You will find out what we expect and what you can do where you don't think these expectations have been met.

We want to create a working environment where you have a strong sense of belonging and inclusion; one where you are safe, valued and respected; and one which is free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

We expect all of our employees to demonstrate the 5th Our Manchester Behaviour, that "we show that we value our differences and treat people fairly"

We are committed to promoting equal opportunities.

We value diversity and encourage fairness and justice.

We want equal chances for everyone in Manchester to work, learn and live free from discrimination and victimisation.

We will tackle all forms discrimination in line with our zero-tolerance statement.

3. Equality

EDI is not just something we do as part of our jobs; it is at the heart of everything we do while at work.

We are committed to becoming a fair and inclusive employer with a workforce that is representative of the communities we serve.

We do not tolerate discriminatory behaviour by our staff and we will set out what happens when you or someone else believes they have been discriminated against.

3.1 Zero-tolerance

We have a clear Zero-tolerance approach to discrimination and any behaviour that makes anyone feel unwelcome or that they don't belong. [Read about our zero-tolerance statement on the intranet.](#)

If you experience discrimination or inappropriate behaviour in work you should report this to your manager or another appropriate manager, following the grievance procedures. [Find out more about the steps you can take on our intranet pages here.](#)

It is everyone's responsibility to understand what Zero-tolerance means and to know how to deal with any inappropriate or discriminatory behaviour you observe or experience.

Acts of discrimination, where they are found to be deliberate, will be dealt with by our disciplinary procedure.

Bullying, harassment or being deliberately hurtful or disrespectful are all also unacceptable and are likely to result in disciplinary action, which may include dismissal.

Through our Third Party Abuse and Harassment Policy, we are committed to taking the strongest possible action to tackle any incidents of harassment or abuse against employees by any third party. You can read more about our Third Party [Abuse and Harassment Policy on the intranet.](#)

4. What we are doing to promote equal opportunities in employment

4.1 Workforce Equality Strategy

Our Workforce Equality Strategy (WES) sets out a vision for the Council to be a place where our workforce fully reflects the rich diversity and talent of the communities we serve at all levels, and is a place where everyone can be themselves and thrive.

Our strategy sets out the importance of ensuring our diverse employees are protected from discrimination in any form, have equitable access to development and have opportunities to progress through the Council's structures, are treated with respect, have good and fulfilling work to do and can bring their whole selves to work.

We are committed to ensuring that our managers and leaders understand and continually demonstrate their commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion through their actions and behaviours. Our policies and processes need to be fair and not discriminate against any group or community, and all managers and leaders need to understand how to support their employees, monitor equality and address any issues quickly.

[Find more information about the WES on the intranet.](#)

4.2 The WES in action

We want EDI to be part of everything we do, both in our aims and objectives, and in our behaviours; it's what we do and it's how we do it. In no particular order, here are some of the ways in which taken action to implement the WES:

- We have introduced a fifth Our Manchester Behaviour: We show we value our differences and treat people fairly.
- We have given all our Senior Managers at least one equality-related objective in their annual performance reviews.
- As part of our vision to fully reflect the diverse communities of Manchester, we have taken positive action measures to help address workforce inequalities by implementing development programmes to attract, retain and cultivate the next generation of leaders. You can read more about the [Leadership Pathway and the LeadHERship Programme on the intranet](#).
- We have rolled out recruitment and selection training to recruiting managers to support them to achieve inclusive recruitment. You can read more about [this training on the intranet](#).
- We have rolled out race equality training across the Council. You can read more about [Let's Talk About Race on the intranet](#).
- We have rolled out a specific training module for our leaders on inclusion. This is mandatory for managers at Grade 10 or above. You can read more about [Inclusive Leadership on the intranet](#).
- We have developed a Good Manager Guide which sets out what we expect from line managers in the Council. It sets out how line managers can actively champion equality, diversity and inclusion. You can read the [Good Manager Guide on the intranet](#).
- We published a statement of support to our trans and non-binary workforce, and published a new and improved guidance document on Gender Transition in the Workplace. [You can read more about this on the intranet](#). We have also rolled out trans awareness face to face training sessions, delivered by Gendered Intelligence, to key service areas, and we have developed a Trans Inclusion Framework.
- We have introduced new policies such as the Third Party Abuse and Harassment and Menopause policies. You can read about our policies on the intranet.

- We have supported staff networks which are a source of positive influence. You can read more about our staff networks on the intranet.
- The Corporate Equality Diversity & Inclusion Leadership Group has been established with Equality Leads in each Directorate's Management Team (see 4.7 and 4.8).

4.3 Workplace Adjustment Hub

In April 2024 we launched the Workplace Adjustment Hub. The introduction of the hub represents our commitment to ensuring disabled employees and employees with long-term health conditions can thrive in the workplace. The hub will provide high quality support, advice and guidance to disabled employees, employees with long-term health conditions and line managers on workplace (reasonable) adjustments.

4.4 Employee Health and Wellbeing Plan

Our Health and Wellbeing Plan sets out how we will build a healthy and high performing workforce by prioritising and promoting the health, safety and wellbeing of our workforce. The plan has a strong connection to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion as it focuses on improving the wellbeing of our diverse workforce and creating a healthy and safe working environment which promotes inclusion. For example, we have rolled out training to better equip line managers to support the mental wellbeing of their teams and we are Timewise accredited, meaning that we promote flexibility in the way we work and recruit. We also have Disability Confident Leader status, meaning that we act as champions for recruiting and retaining disabled staff. You can read more about our [Health and Wellbeing Plan on the intranet](#).

4.5 Talent Plan

Our Talent Plan sets out how we will attract, develop and retain diverse talent at all levels of the organisation. The plan aims to ensure we build diverse workforce at all levels and support our employees to develop new and existing skills to enable them to thrive. The plan focuses on key areas such as strengthening our relationships with under-represented groups and delivering targeted recruitment campaigns in communities so support us to attract diverse talent, and we will undertake an end-to-end review of our recruitment process to ensure each stage is inclusive, supports us to attract diverse talent and enables candidates to be their best selves.

You will be able to read about our Talent Plan on the intranet soon.

4.6 Equality monitoring

As part of the WES we are committed to monitoring data, identifying trends and issues, and acting upon them to meet the aims and objectives of the WES. It is vital therefore that all employees support this by completing the equality questions in the MiSelf section of SAP. [You can read more about equality monitoring on our intranet page.](#)

4.7 Corporate Equality Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Group (CEDILG)

CEDILG oversees activity across the Council and provides assurance to SMT and the Executive Member for Equalities that actions to drive EDI are being taken and are delivering much needed change across the organisation. The Workforce Equalities Strategy is one of the areas that CEDILG monitors, including supporting Directorates to develop service delivery plans, holding Directorates to account. CEDILG is co-chaired by Fiona Ledden, City Solicitor and SMT Lead for Equalities, and by Cllr Joanna Midgley.

4.8 Directorate Equality Leads

Directorate Equality Leads provide visible senior leadership within each Directorate on EDI. They form part of CEDILG and their respective Directorate Management Teams. They provide support and challenge within Directorates, as well as supporting embedding EDI into decision-making on workforce, service-delivery and commissioning. They lead on their Directorate's workforce equalities plan and identify and progress improvements on EDI in their Directorate.

4.9 Equality Champions

Equality Champions provide support and challenge to Directorate Equality Leads and their respective Heads of Service. They contribute to directorate equality action plans and help foster an inclusive working environment.

4.10 Recruitment

Our clear position on equality, diversity and inclusion is set out in each of our job adverts with the following statement:

At Manchester City Council, we strive to create a fair and inclusive workplace that is as diverse as the communities we serve. We want to further increase the diversity of our workforce, in particular the number of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and disabled staff at all levels of the Council. This advert is open to all applicants, and we would particularly encourage applications from candidates identifying with one or both of those characteristics.

5. The Equality Act (2010)

5.1 Protected characteristics

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

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

Those sharing any of the nine protected characteristics are protected from discrimination and less favourable treatment. The protected characteristics are:

Age

Gender Reassignment

Marriage or civil partnership

Pregnancy or maternity

Disability

Race – including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin

Religion or belief

Sex

Sexual orientation

Disability can include long-term health conditions or neurodiversity (Neurodiversity; ADHD, autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia and Tourette's are forms of neurodivergence)

5.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty

The Act also places upon the Council the Public Sector Equality Duty which applies to public authorities.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED or “general duty”) has three elements:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The broad purpose of the general duty on public bodies is to integrate equality and good relations into day-to-day business. If we do not consider how a function can affect different

groups in different ways, it is unlikely to have the intended effect. This can contribute to greater inequality and poor outcomes. The general duty therefore requires organisations to consider how they could positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations. It requires equality considerations to be reflected in the design of policies and the delivery of services, including internal policies, and for these issues to be kept under review to ensure that they are implemented. This is delivered in the Council via Equality Impact Assessments, which [you can read about on the intranet](#).

5.3 Equality Objectives

The PSED also requires the Council to publish equality objectives every four years. For 2024 to 2028, one of our objectives is Promoting Inclusive Employment. Key elements to this objective are that we provide civic leadership in the city and act as exemplars of good employment practice.

You will soon be able to read more about our new equality objectives on [the Council's external website](#).

5.4 Making Manchester Fairer

We are committed to reducing health inequality in Manchester through the Making Manchester Fairer strategy. By working towards a workforce that reflects the diverse communities we serve, we believe we can contribute to this. A more diverse workforce will improve service delivery, bringing better understanding of residents' needs, and support the delivery of better outcomes for residents. We can also continue to provide good quality, secure employment to Manchester residents, who make up 44% of our workforce.

You can read more about Making Manchester Fairer on [the Council's external website](#).

6. Protections

Everyone is protected from discrimination by the Equality Act 2010 while they are in the workplace. This is because everyone shares at least one protected characteristic with others.

Discrimination can take many forms.

Direct discrimination

This is when someone treats someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic. This is almost always unlawful. It is only lawful in specific circumstances.

Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination may occur when an employer applies a policy or way of working which, although intended to be fair and neutral, puts people sharing a protected characteristic at a disadvantage.

Harassment

Harassment related to a protected characteristic is when a person engages in unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of creating a hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment, or violating a worker's dignity.

Victimisation

This is when an employer subjects a worker to a detriment because the worker has done a 'protected act' or because the employer believes that the worker has done or may do a protected act in the future. Protected acts include making complaints, giving evidence or bringing legal action in relation to the Equality Act 2010

There is more information available about these concepts and more in our [Employee Dispute Resolution policy](#) and [guidance](#).

This Workforce Equalities Statement reiterates our position that we have a zero-tolerance policy on discrimination against any protected characteristic. You can read more about our [zero-tolerance policy on the intranet](#).

7. Priority groups

We know from our research and engagement there are several other groups of people who experience discrimination and disadvantage. For this reason, we have identified the following priority groups that we will work with to remove barriers and disadvantage:

- Carers
- Care experienced people and care leavers
- Current and former Armed Forces personnel and their families
- People experiencing homelessness
- People living in poverty including socio-economic duty

Appendix 1 – Staff equality networks and employee groups

Our staff networks give everyone the opportunity to develop, influence and contribute to the work of the Council. [You can find out more about all our staff networks on the intranet.](#)

Appendix 2 – Other sources of support

Trade Unions

You can find support from a Trade Union. We formally recognise three Trade Unions: GMB, Unison and Unite and you can read more here about what this means [here](#).

GMB

[Make Work Better | GMB Union](#)

North West and Irish Regional Office

Columbus Quay

Riverside Drive

Liverpool

L3 4GB

0151 727 0077

Unison

[UNISON - the public service union](#)

UNISON Manchester

Ground Floor

Town Hall Extension

Lloyd Street

Manchester

M2 5HD

0161 254 7500

Unite the Union

[Trade Union, Unions UK, Workers Union - Unite the union](#)

Salford Office

Quayside House

Merchants Quay

Salford Quays

Salford

M50 3SU

Employee Assistance Programme

The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is a free, confidential and independent source of support available to all employees and their immediate family. You can contact them 24/7 on 0800 0280199, or online. [Find out more about the EAP on the intranet.](#)

Equalities Team

Our Equalities Team works across the Council and with partners to ensure we deliver inclusive services to meet the needs of our diverse communities. They also support HROD&T to ensure EDI is embedded in workplace policies and practices. You can contact them on equalitiesteam@manchester.gov.uk

HROD&T

The HR Talent and Diversity and Workforce Equalities Teams drive forward the way we attract, recruit and develop staff, ensuring the workforce is more representative of the diverse communities we serve. You can find out more [on our intranet page.](#)

ACAS

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) is an independent body offering free and independent advice to employers and employees on workplace matters. [Find out more about what they do on their website.](#)

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

The EHRC is an independent regulator who act as the Equality Act regulatory body. They offer guidance to everyone, including public bodies and employers, on equality issues. [Their content is available to all on their website](#), where you can find out more about their work.