



Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Adele Robinson

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Report of: James Henderson, Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement

Report to: Strategy and Resources Committee

Date of Decision: 21st December 2023

Subject: Equality Framework – Equality is Everyone’s Business

Type of Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) undertaken	Initial <input type="checkbox"/>	Full <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Insert EIA reference number and attach EIA: 2474		
Has appropriate consultation/engagement taken place?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below: -		

Purpose of Report:

This report proposes a new draft Equality Framework for Sheffield City Council, to include the Council’s proposed ambitions relating to equality, diversity and inclusion for the next four years as we seek to fulfil the vision set out in the Council Plan of becoming an organisation that puts people at the heart of what we do. By taking the learning from the Race Equality Commission and elsewhere, this framework fundamentally repositions the organisation’s approach to equality, diversity and inclusion over the next four years.

At the heart of the Equality Framework are the proposed new statutory Equality Objectives for Sheffield City Council. These will sit alongside the outcomes agreed in the Council Plan to provide a clear focus to our work on EDI. The Equality Objectives are focused around our three core roles in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion, namely:

- **City and community leadership:** championing equality through knowledgeable and inspirational leadership, and building a fairer Sheffield by fostering good relationships, listening, and engaging with the city’s diverse communities and together becoming an anti-racist city.

- **Service provider:** providing supportive, accessible and customer centred services which increasingly understand and meet the needs of all Sheffield's communities.
- **Employer:** Further developing a culture where employees feel safe, valued and have a sense of belonging, where equality is everyone's business, and by building a representative and highly skilled workforce which reflects the city's diversity

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Strategy and Resources Committee:

- Endorse the draft Equality Framework.
- Agree the draft Equality Objectives as set out within the Framework, subject to public consultation.
- Agree to proceed with public consultation on the Equality Framework and Equality Objectives and bring to this committee a further report following that consultation.
- Agree that the further report will include detailed action plans for each Objective setting out how they will be achieved.
- Note that in line with a recent Council motion, and the recent decisions taken by the Strategy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 13 December 2023, care experience (those who have at any part in their childhood been part of the care system) will be treated as an equality characteristic by the council in situations where protected characteristics are considered (including, but not limited to, equality impact assessments).

Background Papers:

[Equality Objectives 2019-23](#)

[Equality Annual Report 2021-22](#) and [Workforce Report 2021 -22](#)

[Equality awareness days report](#), 19 April 2023

[Race Equality Commission report](#), 14 July 2023

[Council response to the Race Equality Commission report](#), 5 December 2022

[Update on Sheffield City Council's response to the Race Equality Commission](#), August 2023

[Protected Characteristics for Care Experienced People](#), December 2023

[Our Statement of Climate Commitments](#) – 13th December 2022

See annex B for references

Lead Officer to complete: -		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed.	Finance: Liz Gough Head of Service, Finance and Commercial Services
		Legal: Nadine Wynter Legal Services Manager
		Equalities & Consultation: Bashir Khan Senior Equalities and Engagement Officer
		Climate: Laura Ellendale Sustainability Programme Officer
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	SLB member who approved submission:	James Henderson
3	Committee Chair consulted:	Cllr Tom Hunt
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: Adele Robinson	Job Title: Equalities and Engagement Manager
	Date: 13 December 2023	

1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 This report seeks Strategy and Resources Committee's approval of the draft Equality Framework, attached as Appendix A.
- 1.2 The Framework sets out the Council's proposed ambitions relating to equality, diversity and inclusion for the next four years as we seek to fulfil the vision set out in the Council Plan of becoming an organisation that puts people at the heart of what we do. By taking the learning from the Race Equality Commission and elsewhere, this framework fundamentally repositions the organisation's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion over the next four years.
- 1.3 At the heart of the Equality Framework are the proposed new statutory Equality Objectives for Sheffield City Council. These will sit alongside the outcomes agreed in the Council Plan to provide a clear focus to our work on EDI. The Equality Objectives are focused around our three core roles in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion, namely:
- **City and community leadership:** championing equality through knowledgeable and inspirational leadership, and building a fairer Sheffield by fostering good relationships, listening, and engaging with the city's diverse communities and together becoming an anti-racist city.
 - **Service provider:** providing supportive, accessible and customer centred services which increasingly understand and meet the needs of all Sheffield's communities.
 - **Employer:** Further developing a culture where employees feel safe, valued and have a sense of belonging, where equality is everyone's business, and by building a representative and highly skilled workforce which reflects the city's diversity.
- 1.4 By achieving the equality objectives set out in the framework, and through the specific work set out in the accompanying Race Equality Report, we will support the ambition of becoming an organisation and city that puts anti-racism at its heart.
- 1.5 The framework is presented to the committee as a draft, pending consultation with the public, which will take place in the new year. The results of this consultation will be used to inform action planning in support of the objectives. The final framework and action plan will be brought back to this committee for approval in March 2024.
- 1.6 The progress we make towards achieving these objectives will be measured through a new performance framework, integrated with the Council's main performance management approach, as agreed by the Strategy and Resources Committee at its previous meeting. This will enable Strategy and Resources Committee to hold the organisation to account for delivery, and in support of this, the Committee will receive

regular performance reports against progress towards the goals set out in this framework.

Care Experience

- 1.7 Strategy and Resources Committee agreed on 13 December 2023, in response to a resolution passed by Full Council on 1 November 2023, that the Council will treat care experience as if it were a Protected Characteristic so that future services and policies made and adopted by the Council should be assessed through Equality Impact Assessments to determine the impact of changes on people with care experience, alongside those who formally share a Protected Characteristic. This would raise awareness across the Council of services' roles in being a responsible corporate parent to care leavers. It would raise the profile of the care experienced population because the impact on care experienced people would form part of all decision making. This will put the voices, needs, priorities and rights of our young people at the heart of everything we do.
- 1.8 As part of the work to take forward the new Equality Framework, care experience will be fully embedded within our equalities monitoring and impact assessment processes, and consideration will be given to what further measures will be needed to ensure that care experience is proactively considered when designing and reviewing service delivery, within our responsibilities as an employer, and in championing the contribution and profile of those people who have experienced care right across the city.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

- 2.1 The draft Equality Framework directly supports the achievement of the Council Plan outcomes as agreed by the Committee at its previous meeting. At the heart of the plan is a focus on the people of Sheffield, ensuring that everyone in the city shares in the benefits of a growing prosperous place.
- 2.2 The Council Plan, along with the Performance Management Framework and Medium-Term Financial Strategy, provides the strong foundation from which the Equality Framework and Race Equality approach flow. It is clear that we will listen, involve and work with the people of our great city. We will celebrate and stand up for the diversity of Sheffield, maximising the assets and strengths of communities, connecting more people into the city's success and creating opportunities for everyone. We want everyone in Sheffield to achieve their potential with fulfilling and healthy lives.
- 2.3 The Council Plan has three policy drivers – people, prosperity and planet – which place people at the heart of what we do while prioritising long-term prosperity in a way which protects the local environment. Its five strategic outcomes for the Council, informed by the things residents care about, are cross-cutting.

The Equality Framework supports the Council Plan's strong focus on equalities through each of these outcomes by considering the differential impacts between and across communities and groups. Its goals support the Council Plan's policy drivers

and strategic aims to improve equality, diversity and inclusion and reduce disparities and inequality.

This Equality Framework sets out in more detail how we will ensure that we understand the needs of everyone in the city, that we deliver services that respond to those needs, that we celebrate the city's diversity, and that we ensure that everyone is able to have their say about what matters to them.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 This Equality Framework also takes the learning from our annual reports over the last 4 years of our previous objectives, the work on race equality following the Race Equality Commission and other Charters we have committed to, such as the Age Friendly City, Diverse by Design and sets out our new Objectives for the coming years.
- 3.2 The development of the Council's Equality Framework involved senior leaders and teams across the Council. It also draws on stakeholder feedback gathered via the Equality Partnership, insights from our consultation and engagement exercises and awareness-raising events held. It also responds to staff feedback that they want to see their Council show leadership on EDI matters, improve take-up of EDI training, diversify career progression opportunities, and improve consistency in workplace adjustments and service accessibility.
- 3.3 Following endorsement of this report, it is proposed that a public consultation takes place on the framework and the proposed equality objectives, with a final report brought back to this committee in March 2024, which will set out the findings of that consultation and any revisions to the framework required as a result. We will take steps to ensure that everyone in the city has the opportunity to participate in this consultation, and we will use a variety of in-person and digital methods to hear people's voices. As described above, that final report will also include an action plan setting out the practical steps we plan to take to achieve the new set of equality objectives.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

Equality Implications

- 4.1 The Council has conducted an Equality Impact Assessment as part of developing the Equality Framework, as well as an EIA for the Race Equality Report. It notes positive impacts across protected characteristics as a result of the increased focus on equality, diversity and inclusion. It further notes the importance of the intersectionality of characteristics. Different characteristics will be differentially impacted across the different measures included.

Legal Implications

- 4.2 The Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to in the exercise of its functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

4.3 The Act recognises 9 protected Characteristics those being, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. Everyone shares protected characteristics.

4.4 The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

4.5 There are also other implications outside of the Equality Act protected characteristics that the Council commits to responding within our Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process such as socio-economic disadvantage, armed forces, carers and people who care experienced.

4.6 The Equality Regulations 2011 require all public bodies to prepare and publish one or more objectives it thinks it should do to achieve the public sector equality duty as set out in s149 of the Equality Act 2010. These objectives must be specific and measurable and must be refreshed every four years. The objectives set out in the framework meet the council's obligations in this regard.

4.7 This report does not have any specific legal implications beyond what is set out above.

Financial implications

4.8 This report does not contain any new financial implications. The Council has a central Equalities and Engagement team, and its associated costs support the organisation in meeting our Public Sector Equality and consultation duties and council wide equality and engagement work.

4.9 Any new financial implications associated with individual projects or policy changes implemented as a result of this framework will be considered as part of the individual decision-making processes for these.

Climate Implications

4.10 This report sets out our new Equality Framework and as such the report does not have any direct climate implications and a full scored Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) has not been deemed necessary. It is important to acknowledge that some groups, especially the most vulnerable, are likely to be disproportionately affected by climate

change impacts. There is a clear area of cross-over between EIA's and Climate Impact Assessments, therefore the climate implications of the report have been considered.

- 4.11 It is widely recognised that climate change will have a more negative effect on people with protected characteristics, particularly people living in poverty, people with some long-term health conditions and disabled people and Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic people, who are disproportionately likely to both experience disability and poverty. Young people are also impacted, by being more impacted by climate change throughout their lifetimes.
- 4.12 The transition to a net zero society is happening independently of any decision of Sheffield City Council, but the local authority has an ambition to reach net zero by 2030, well ahead of the national target, and this creates additional challenges. The Council has a key role to play in ensuring that the transition happens in a way which ensures both climate justice and social justice.
- 4.13 The impacts of climate change on equality, inclusion and diversity, and the role each policy committee has in supporting a just transition was set out in "Our Statement of Climate Commitments" at Strategy and Resources Committee on the 13th December 2023. The statements also draw attention to the socioeconomic, health and wellbeing and other benefits to taking action on climate change, increase understanding that failing to act to address climate change will likely result in wider and greater inequality, and that activity taken to address climate change can also address social justice to deliver strong co-benefits.
- 4.14 We are committed to ensuring that our action on promoting equality, diversity and inclusion is aligned, supportive and complementary of our response to the climate emergency. As decisions are made on specific decisions, as the objectives in the Framework are implemented further climate impact assessments may be necessary and will be undertaken as appropriate.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 The Council has previously agreed that it should pursue a specific approach to equality rather than one where equality is 'mainstreamed' within other activity. Because of the importance given to equality, diversity and inclusion within the draft City Goals and Council Plan this report does not recommend a change to that approach. Furthermore, there is a statutory requirement for the council to adopt a set of Equality Objectives, as proposed in this Framework. As such no alternative options have been considered.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 It is recommended that Strategy and Resources Committee approve the equality framework as it will support the fundamental repositioning of the council's equality, diversity and inclusion work in line with the ambitions of the council plan and our work to embed anti-racism within the organisation and the city. By agreeing the framework,

the committee will also ensure that we meet our statutory obligation to publish a set of four-year equality objectives.

Equality Framework: Equality is Everyone's Business – Foreword

Our Vision for Equality for Sheffield.

Sheffield is a friendly, vibrant, culturally diverse, and inclusive city. We are passionate about the prosperity of our city, our people, and our planet. We were the first city of sanctuary and are committed to promoting and enhancing equality, diversity, and inclusivity and actively challenging racism and discrimination in all its forms.

People are at the heart of what we do as Sheffield City Council, and, through this Framework, our new Equality Objectives will support us to do this, in line with the outcomes set out in the Council Plan. Each one places the importance of ensuring equality and valuing diversity and inclusion are at its heart. We seek to welcome, understand, support, and value individuals and communities by promoting equality and addressing inequalities to build a fairer, safer and more prosperous future for the communities we serve.

We are committed to promoting equality, opportunities and fairness inside our organisation, through our services and across the city.

We will promote and support our diverse communities, building good relationships and cohesion between communities, where everyone feels welcome and connected and feel they can benefit from and contribute to the growth of our city.

Equality is about everyone, but people are individuals, and their needs will be met in different ways. Some people, especially the most vulnerable, or those who face additional barriers will need a bit more support from us than others.

The Equality Act 2010 sets out the legal duties in relation to equality that we must proactively work to eliminate discrimination harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relationships between group different groups of people. However, as a council aspire to go further than compliance, in building a more inclusive and welcoming culture in the council and city.

Equality is everyone's business, and everyone has a role to play in the achieving the Objectives set out in this Framework. Elected Members, managers and officers all have duties and individual responsibilities.

This Framework will guide our equality work across the city for the next four years, and progress will be measured and reported on yearly to ensure we remain on track.

Introduction

The Framework sets out the Council's ambitions relating to equality, diversity and inclusion for the next four years as we seek to fulfil the vision set out in the Council Plan of becoming an organisation that puts people at the heart of what we do. By taking the learning from the Race Equality Commission and elsewhere, this framework fundamentally repositions the organisation's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion over the next four years.

The draft Equality Framework directly supports the achievement of the Council Plan outcomes. At the heart of the plan is a focus on the people of Sheffield, ensuring that everyone in the city shares in the benefits of a growing prosperous place.

The Council Plan, along with the Performance Management Framework and Medium-Term Financial Strategy, provides the strong foundation from which the Equality Framework and Race Equality approach flow. The Council Plan is clear that: *"we will listen, involve and work with the people of our great city. We will celebrate and stand up for the diversity of Sheffield, maximising the assets and strengths of communities, connecting more people into the city's success and creating opportunities for everyone. We want everyone in Sheffield to achieve their potential with fulfilling and healthy lives."*

The Council Plan has three policy drivers – people, prosperity and planet – which place people at the heart of what we do while prioritising long-term prosperity in a way which protects the local environment. Its five strategic outcomes for the Council, informed by the things residents care about, are cross-cutting.

The Equality Framework supports the Council Plan's strong focus on equalities through each of these outcomes by considering the differential impacts between and across communities and groups. Its goals support the Council Plan's policy drivers and strategic aims to improve equality, diversity and inclusion and reduce disparities and inequality.

At the heart of the Equality Framework are the proposed new statutory Equality Objectives for Sheffield City Council. These will sit alongside the outcomes agreed in the Council Plan and our values (together we get things done, openness and honesty are important to us, and people are at the heart of what we do) to provide a clear focus to our work on EDI. The Equality Objectives are focused around our three core roles in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion, namely:

- **City and community leadership:** championing equality through knowledgeable and inspirational leadership, and building a fairer Sheffield by fostering good relationships, listening, and engaging with the city's diverse communities and together becoming an anti-racist city.
- **Service provider:** providing supportive, accessible and customer centred services which increasingly understand and meet the needs of all Sheffield's communities.
- **Employer:** Further developing a culture where employees feel safe, valued and have a sense of belonging, where equality is everyone's business, and by building a representative and highly skilled workforce which reflects the city's diversity.

Everyone has a role to play in supporting the Objectives in this Framework including Elected Members, Senior Leaders, Managers and Officers, all of whom have legal duties and individual responsibilities in relation to EDI. This Framework will guide our work and progress will be measured and reported on annually to ensure we're on track.

The Framework is also central to helping us to achieve other national Standards and Charters we are committed to such as being an Age Friendly City, a Disability Confident Employer and achieving excellence in the Equality Framework for Local Government.

We will monitor our performance against our goals in a new action plan and report via our annual report and through the Council Plan performance framework. EDI will be integrated into the monitoring of our Council Plan and service plans, so it is part of everything we do and not an add on.

Learning From Our Previous Equality Objectives 2019-23

We set new Equality Objectives every four years as required by law. In 2019 we set out our Equality Objectives to 2023. The four years since those objectives were agreed have been some of the most tumultuous in our recent history, including the global Covid-19 pandemic which began in 2020. The unconscionable murder of George Floyd and the subsequent Black Lives Matter movement shone a light on the endemic racism which persists both across the world and here in Sheffield. These events led elected members to commission the Race Equality Commission in the summer of 2020, which, when it reported in July 2022, clearly set out the distance the city has to travel to become anti-racist. The REC also highlighted some of the challenges facing Sheffield City Council if we are to become the anti-racist, welcoming and inclusive organisation that we want to be.

More recently we have seen the tensions in the city following the Hamas attack on Israel and subsequent conflict in the Middle East. That has highlighted the fragility of some of our partnership structures for inter-faith and inter-community dialogue and the hard work that will be needed to rebuild these.

Therefore, a lot depends on the success of this Framework. It must help support the transformation of Sheffield City Council, ensuring that we focus on the changes that we need to make, and helping us to stay true to the ambitions set out in the Council Plan.

This Equality Framework takes the learning from our annual report over the last 4 years, the work on race equality following the Race Equality Commission and other charters we have committed to, such as the Age Friendly City, to set out our new goals for the coming years.

Furthermore, since the last set of Objectives we have had a new Census in 2021, this continued to demonstrate that over the last 30 years, Sheffield has become a more diverse city and the make-up of our school-aged population, shows this will continue. This is especially true in some areas such as increased ethnic diversity and for the first time we now have data on sexual orientation and gender reassignment which appeared as questions in the census for the first time.

The change in population also shows that Sheffield's population is getting older, with especially large increases in the percentage of people in their fifties, and those aged seventy or over. This is likely to have significant consequences for the demand for services used by

older people in the city. Furthermore, the percentage of people who reported having “No religion” increased from 31.2 % to 43.4% in 2021. A summary of this data is laid out in the appendix to this framework – this has informed the development of our new set of objectives.

In preparation for this Framework, we have identified key points of learning from the last set of Objectives. These being:

- Continuing to improve data collection and analysis, draw on other sources where local data isn't available and use service equality monitoring information to support improvement.
- Directing equality, diversity and inclusion through the whole organisation, ensuring service plans reflect equality goals and commitments.
- Ensuring EDI is fundamental to our governance and decision-making processes including by utilising our equality impact assessment process more effectively and robustly, ensuring they are undertaken at the right time with good evidence and in a proportionate way, and that their findings are actively used as part of our decision-making
- Strengthen relationships with, and understanding of, the diverse communities within the city across all characteristics.
- Carry out staff surveys to assess the morale of the workforce including assessing satisfaction levels of different groups of employees.
- Develop a more inclusive culture within the Council including through effective learning and development around EDI for staff and Members.

Becoming an Anti-Racist Organisation – Our Approach to Race Equality

One of the key drivers of this framework is the findings and recommendations of the independently chaired Race Equality Commission, which was established in 2020. Its aim was to make a non-partisan strategic assessment of the nature, extent, causes and impact of race inequality in the city and to make recommendations for tackling them.

The REC's [Full Report](#) and [Executive Summary](#) were launched on July 14th, 2022, at the [Millennium Galleries](#). In this the commission set out its recommendations to Sheffield as a city as a whole, and to organisations including the Council, to support and challenge us all to take action to improve race equality. Since the launch, the Council's initial response was considered and agreed by the Strategy and Resources Committee in August 2022 and a more detailed action plan was agreed by the cross-party Committee in December 2022. One of the key recommendations of the REC was to establish a legacy body to provide assurance around progress towards becoming an anti-racist city. The council has actively supported the legacy body task-and-finish working group in designing the role and form of a legacy body, which was agreed by the Sheffield City Partnership Board in November 2023.

In taking action on the REC recommendations, we have worked with services across the organisation to better understand progress to date and what is needed to go even further. We have also engaged with stakeholders and drawn on data and the evidence base.

Complementing this framework, in December 2023 the council has agreed a holistic, future facing approach to race equality. It sets out what we stand for as a council and our

commitment to race equality, where we are as an organisation and the action we will now take, illustrated with work which has taken place across the organisation. The approach responds to feedback encouraging the Council to take ownership and make clear what race equality means to us as an organisation and what we will do next in our ongoing journey. This is how we ensure that we live up to the promise set out in the REC report which the Council committed to and thereby agreed to implement the recommendations which were relevant to the Council, become an anti-racist organisation and facilitate the formation of a legacy partnership.

The approach gives the Council a clear position statement on race equality against which work will be aligned and we can be held to account. It lays out data about the make-up of Sheffield and of our organisation, along with where we are against the seven qualities the Race Equality Commission said an anti-racist organisation would have.

The race equality approach is organised around the same three roles of the council as this framework (namely as city and community leader, service deliverer, and employer).

Together, our approach to race equality and this broader equality framework will ensure that race equality specifically, and equality, diversity and inclusion in general, run through everything we do.

Embracing Equality - Celebrating Diversity - Fostering Inclusion Equality Objectives 2024 – 2028

Our draft statutory Equality Objectives for the next four-year period will collectively ensure a strong and focused approach to improving equality, diversity and inclusion across all protected characteristics over the coming period. Each of the three Equality Objectives is supported by goals which will help to support their achievement.

City and Community Leadership

Champion equality through knowledgeable and inspirational leadership. Build a fairer Sheffield by fostering good relationships, listening, and engaging with the city's diverse communities and together becoming an anti-racist city.

Goal 1 - Knowledgeable leaders to actively champion equality and diversity, working in partnership with others, to build an inclusive council.

- Committed leaders will act as equality ambassadors, encourage, enhance, and value the city's diversity whilst challenging inequalities.
- The Council will identify and enable routes to grow diverse leadership which reflects the city's communities.
- Strong and knowledgeable leaders will recognise the complexities of Sheffield's different communities and work in partnership to make it an inclusive, anti-racist city.

Goal 2 – Work in active partnership, collaborating to shape Sheffield as a welcoming and thriving city where people are at the heart of what we do.

- Implement a revised engagement strategy which meets the needs of the changing profile of the city.

- Work with Sheffield Equality Partnerships, Local Area Committees and the voluntary, community and faith sectors to build community assets across diverse groups.
- Work in collaboration with communities to inform and celebrate diversity across a range of equality awareness days.

Goal 3 - Leaders and communities will work in partnership to make Sheffield an anti-racist city.

- Implement a specific race equality approach for the Council to eliminate discrimination and racism from organisations, services and practices (as set out in the December 2023 Race Equality report).

Service Delivery

To provide supportive, accessible and customer centred services which increasingly understand and meet the needs of all Sheffield's communities.

Goal 1- To use and monitor data effectively to deliver inclusive services to meet the needs of diverse communities.

- Using a range of approaches to broaden customer engagement, gather feedback to better understand the needs of our communities.
- Analyse and publish EDI data to identify and address barriers, to inform and improve service planning and delivery.
- Provide accessible information about services in a variety of ways to meet the needs of our customers.
- Use Equality Impact Assessments to identify barriers, improve accessibility, outcomes, and customer satisfaction across Sheffield's diverse communities.

Goal 2- To establish an accessible and equitable approach to procurement and commissioning.

- Continually review and implement best practice in equalities, diversity and inclusion within our supply chain and commissioned services.
- Widen the equality of opportunity across diverse communities to grant funding and commissioning, by providing accessible support and information.
- Encourage quality EDI practices within commissioning and procurement to improve outcomes.
- Ensure transparency and accountability about funding and commissioning decisions by publishing relevant equality information.

Goal 3- To deliver effective services which contribute to reducing inequalities and enable Sheffield to be a more inclusive city.

- Listen to and involve community groups when evaluating and developing services.
- Utilise community insights and feedback when reviewing and improving services.
- Review and assess our services to try to ensure they contribute to promoting equity.
- Work in partnership to ensure communities maximise their capabilities and assets to help reduce inequality and enable them to flourish.

Workforce

We will establish a culture where employees feel safe, valued and have a sense of belonging, where equality is everyone's business. We will build a representative and highly skilled workforce which reflects the city's diversity.

Goal 1 To have an engaged workforce where employees feel safe, valued, have a sense of belonging.

- Use employee feedback effectively to continuously improve our practice, policies and decision making to promote equity across the organisation.
- Utilise external equality standards and commitments to achieve positive change such as through our work with the Sheffield Race Equality Partnership and implementation of our approach to race equality, Disability Confident and Age Friendly City etc.
- Develop HR policies that support our values and are applied to avoid bias or discrimination, including monitoring and analyse of workforce HR data
- Recognise good practice and examples of healthy inclusive workplaces, but always challenge unacceptable behaviour.
- Provide a robust training programme which will develop knowledge and understanding of EDI to support open, respectful conversations, removing barriers to promote belonging.

Goal 2 – To have a representative and skilled workforce which reflects, values and understands the City's diversity.

- Increase the diversity of our workforce to reflect the city through an evidence-based mix of recruitment, promotions and development.
- Develop recruitment approaches that attract talent from across all of Sheffield's communities.
- Develop initiatives for underrepresented groups.
- Use Equality Impact Assessments to inform our people strategy to ensure impacts are understood and mitigated where possible.
- Commit to a continuous improvement journey for workforce data with all initiatives working toward the effective and relevant collection of workforce equality data

Goal 3 –To ensure the wellbeing of our workforce where everyone feels engaged to champion inclusivity.

- Recognise, appreciate, and celebrate our employees' achievements and contributions in line with our values
- Identify targeted, evidence-based opportunities for employees to network, collaborate, exchange ideas, learn from one another to progress in their careers.
- Develop and deliver tools and support programmes to enable all employees to maintain their health and wellbeing and function in their role in a safe and secure environment.

Delivering the Equality Framework:

Together we get things done.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion is everyone's responsibility. A collective effort by all will support building a welcoming and more inclusive culture within the Council. This is an ongoing process that requires commitment from all within the organisation, from, Elected Members, Senior Leaders, and Officers. However, engagement of citizens and employees, accountability and leadership are vital if we are to meet our goals.

Employee and Community Engagement

People have told us that they want meaningful influence over decisions in their communities and by working together to achieve real change will be the driving force behind our future. Every person in this city contributes to Sheffield's story so we need to listen and use the views, knowledge and experience within and beyond the Council to improve what we do.

In the workplace, by ensuring that people know that their views are not only listened to but acted upon, helps improve wellbeing and creates a sense of belonging.

More widely, by actively listening and involving our communities, it can improve the services we provide directly and those we commission. Specifically, citizen engagement can

- Help us to understand the views of our communities and value varied perspectives and increase innovation.
- Improve problem solving and decision making through more immediate feedback.
- Build and nurture relationships so we can work together on shared aims.

In the last year we have sought to improve our engagement in a variety of ways and over the next year we will seek to further improve this as noted in the Framework. Our internal engagement for example via our newly established Employee Equality Hubs, and the new employee engagement platform Hive and externally via our new digital Have Your Say Sheffield platform. As such, during the course of 2024, we will bring forward further proposals to strengthen both community and employee engagement in the organisation.

Accountability

Strategy and Resources Committee will provide accountability for delivery against the objectives set out in this framework, and the action plan that will accompany it.

The Council takes its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty seriously and Elected Members are asked to use their unique position to ensure the Council lives up to the requirements of that Duty. For example, through asking questions about equalities, evidence and consultation with diverse communities in the committees on which they sit. To support the fulfilment of the objectives in this framework:

- Elected Members should further reinforce the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty through emphasising its importance in all elements of their decision-making.
- Democratic Services should support Elected Members in this by removing items from committee agendas if they do not have an equality impact assessment and it is not supplied.

- Progress against this framework and associated action plans will be reported to the relevant Committee so that accountability for progress for each service is placed with the relevant Senior Leaders, Elected Members, and Committee.

The Strategic Equality and Inclusion Board will continue to oversee equality work in the Council, with any concerns escalated to Senior Leadership teams as appropriate and the Performance and Delivery Board which will also monitor performance against the Performance Framework.

Leadership - If we are to make a success of our aspirations and live up to our standards, the Council's Senior Officers and Elected Members need to lead from the front. To do this senior leadership will:

- Hold each of our directorates to account for performance against the standards set out in this report, building them into service plans and monitoring work through the EDI performance framework.
- Have designated senior inclusion and diversity workforce champions. These people are all members of the Senior Leadership Team and include the Chief Executive as intersectionality champion.

The senior champions link with the Employee Equality Hubs and support the Council to foster an inclusive environment. These roles involve modelling inclusion, staff engagement, supporting initiatives and championing specific diversities. While these are predominately workforce facing roles, where appropriate they will be briefed on, and on occasion involved in, external facing activities. This emphasis ensures that these roles complement, but do not overlap with, each service areas' responsibilities to factor equality, diversity and inclusion and race equality into their service design, planning, and delivery.

1. Convey that equality is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.
2. Set standards which are rigorously upheld.
3. Place accountability, roles and responsibilities in the right places.
4. Listen, learn and collaborate through engagement.
5. Leading from the top and evolving with our city partners.

To support the achievement of this framework, there are a number of other critical groups who have important roles to play:

Employee Equality Hubs, promoting positive change within SCC, fostering a culture of respect, understanding, and collaboration. Establishing spaces where individuals feel comfortable and supported in discussing issues related to equality and diversity.

SCC Officers understand and demonstrate inclusive behaviour and value diversity internally and externally within SCC. Managers, assess, plan, and deliver service plans using an EDI lens at all times.

Senior Leaders and Directorate Leadership Teams have a significant influence on the organisational culture and values. They will regularly monitor and evaluate performance against the Framework.

Partners encourage collaborations between different organisations, community groups, and businesses to work towards common goals of equality and inclusion.

Elected Members play a crucial role in building relationships and engaging with diverse communities, community organisations, groups, and other stakeholders to understand their needs and perspectives.

Communities actively engage with different groups to understand their needs, concerns, and aspirations. Provide opportunities for learning about different cultures, perspectives, and experiences.

Strategic Equality and Inclusion Board (SEIB) and EDI Delivery Group the SEIB will review and evaluate progress in achieving our EDI goals and the Delivery Group will work together to share good practice.

Equality Partnerships and Voluntary Community and Faith Sector engage with underrepresented communities to ensure they have an effective voice in decision making and being a critical friend.

Monitoring Performance of the Equality Framework

The Council Plan sets out the Council's overall objectives for the coming four years. Underpinning the Council Plan will be a performance framework to enable progress towards the outcomes set out in the plan to be measured and for the public and Elected Members to hold the organisation to account for delivery. The performance framework will include within it a set of measures designed to support the achievement of the Equality Objectives set out in this Framework.

All services will be required to report against the performance framework to the Performance and Delivery Board. This will enable the Council to take a 'comply or explain' approach and monitor whether what we are doing is better, fair and promoting equality. When evidencing progress against the Equality Framework, services will be required to show how they are developing and applying a nuanced understanding of the groups they serve.

The performance framework will be a major part of how we will drive standardisation and meet the standards set out in this report. It will support us to implement this report, monitor progress and intervene where issues occur. It will also enable us to report on progress, including to the Race Equality Legacy Partnership.

The Objectives and commitments in our Equality is Everyone's Business Framework are set every four years.

Sitting beneath this Equality Framework will be an annual action plan addressing all the new Objectives, which will reflect the different ways in which we are working to make our workforce, services, and communities more inclusive, accessible and equitable.

The action plan will have indicators to help us measure progress against our goals. The implementation will be overseen by the Strategic Equality and Inclusion Board, and reporting will align with performance monitoring.

The action plan will be reviewed annually and sit within our annual report to outline our progress. As part of the annual report, we will seek external feedback on how others see and

experience our progress as part of reporting process including via the Sheffield Equality Partnership.

We will update the Strategy and Resources Committee annually on our progress against the Framework via the Annual Equality Report.

The Performance and Delivery Board will monitor the Councils EDI performance in 2 key-ways;

- By ensuring we monitor the outcomes of protected characteristics within the council plan and service plans.
- Monitoring performance against the Equality Framework Action Plan.

APPENDIX – Our diverse city in data

The city's population is changing...

Over the last 30 years, Sheffield has become a more diverse city and the make-up of our school-aged population indicates this will continue.

Between the 2011 and 2021 censuses the population of Sheffield grew by 0.7%, from just under 552,700 in 2011 to around 556,500 in 2021, although this was lower than expected and lower than projections.

The median age of a person living in Sheffield is 37, which is an increase of 1 year from 2011. There has been a 10.3% decrease in the number of people aged 35-49, which suggests that some people are leaving the city to raise their families.

The census categories in relation to race have changed at every census, so the groups can't be compared directly. But overall trends show that the percentage of the population made up of the group likely to contain those who identify as White British, has shrunk. The group containing those who would likely identify as Pakistani has remained the second largest group and increased in percentage and number. The Other White group has been the third largest group and has also grown. All other groups making up more than 1% of the Sheffield population have all maintained or increased their percentage of the Sheffield population since 1991.

The ethnicities of our age groups look very different. 93% of Sheffield's over 65s are White British compared to 58% of our Under 16s. As our younger age groups grow, so our city will become more ethnically diverse. This is significant for our workforce which has an older profile.

83.6% of Sheffield's residents were born in England. This decreased from 86.7% in 2011. The next highest country of birth was Pakistan which grew from 1.6% to 1.8% over the last decade.

Sheffield's younger people are also more likely to identify with a more diverse range of sexual orientations with 7.9% of people aged between 16 and 35 declaring as an LGB+ sexual orientation.

Sheffield has some of highest rates of social renting in England being amongst the top 15 percent of local authority areas for the share of households in the social rented sector. This has fallen in the last 10 years from 24.8% to 22.6%. Of those who are renting from the council 28.7% of them have a disability and 57.1% are female.

We also have high levels of deprivation within Sheffield which sees over a third (34.4%) of residents living in the 20% most deprived wards in England. This also means that over 1 in 5 (21.8%) of Sheffield's children live in relative low-income families. The average for England is 19.5%.

44.5% of Sheffield residents describe their health as very good which is an increase from 43%. The number of disabled people has also decreased over the last 10 years from 21.7% to 20.6%; key to this decrease was the number of people who identified as having a disability and being limited a lot which dropped to 9.1% from 10.5% a decade ago. The drop may also account for the reduction in the number of people providing weekly unpaid care in the city which is now at 9.9%. In the 2011 Census 12.2% of the population over 5 years old provided some form of weekly unpaid care.

There has also been a large increase in the number of people who have no religion in Sheffield with this increasing from 31.2% to 43.4% in the last decade. There was also a

significant increase in Muslims in the city which increased from 7.7% to 10.3%. Conversely, the number of Christians decreased substantially from over half the population at 52.5% to 38.5%.

And so is the council...

The council's headcount at the start of the financial year was 8245. We use the overall headcount figure to count the number of people rather than full-time equivalent (or FTE). This means that some staff may appear twice or more in the figures if they have more than one job with the council. The majority of people (60.6%) who work for the council are women. This may be because of the prevalence of part-time and flexible working, which is known to be more heavily used by women than men.

Half of all council employees are 48 or over. Because older people are more likely to be disabled, we have an over-representation of disabled people within the workforce. As Sheffield City Council also has a high number of female employees this also means there is likely to be a higher than expected number of carers in the workforce.

The council is also becoming more diverse and the quality of the data we collect on our workforce is good. Although year-on-year the diversity of the council has increased, for some protected characteristics it still lags behind the wider community.

The council currently has 17.3% Black, Asian and Minoritised Ethnic (BAME) staff where the community has grown to 25.5% in the 16-64 age groups. There is positive news, the increased focus on inclusive recruitment and ensuring recruiting managers are trained on this has seen a 20% increase in the number of BAME staff appointed to 24.5% of all new recruits. This has begun to translate into improvements for promotion and progression and does represent a positive start to work around recruitment which will see an increase in positive action work and the renewal of recruitment and selection policy and process.

In terms of individual ethnic groups, the key under representations within the council are Asian/Asian British (5.1% of the workforce) in comparison to the local community (10.5%) and Other Ethnic Group, which includes white non-British groups. This data fits with our ethnicity data which shows a disparity around Asian/Asian British communities which many of our Muslim and Hindu colleagues are likely to be from. We continue to work in this area to understand why there are barriers for people of these religions and associated ethnicities.

The council also has relatively high numbers of staff declaring a disability (13.3%) in comparison to similar authorities and declarations are slowly continuing to rise. Although SCC is still below the UK working population benchmark of 15.5%. This should be seen as a positive however it is also worth noting that according to Department of Work and Pensions data only around 52.6% of disabled people are in work¹. Alongside this, the improvements to recruitment and selection are also having a positive impact on disabled staff with 19.1% of those shortlisted and 15.4% of appointments declaring a disability which are both higher than the councils' profile.

5.3% of the council's staff identify as LGB+ (8.2% at CO level). This compares favourably with the city comparator which is 4.8% of people not identifying as straight or heterosexual (Census 2021). This has steadily grown and has now overtaken the profile for the city. We have high number of staff in grades 10-11 who identify as LGB+ and increased representation at Chief Officer level. The highest proportion identify as bisexual (2.1%). This

¹ [Employment of disabled people 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/employment-of-disabled-people-2022)

is despite having a predominantly older workforce as we know that younger people are more likely to identify as LGB+².

Another striking aspect of the council's workforce is the number of Unpaid Carers. This is linked to the council having an older workforce and an overrepresentation of females and because of the person-centred workforce policy that has been introduced over the last few years, such as carer's leave and increased flexible working. This has meant that 18.6% of our workforce now provides unpaid care in comparison to the 10.5% of the 16-64 age profile of the community.

² [Rainbow Britain Report \(2022\) | Stonewall](#)

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