

Policy and Sustainability Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 5 October 2021

Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Update

Executive/routine Wards Council Commitments	Executive All
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1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Policy and Sustainability Committee is recommended to note the progress being made in relation to the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan, for the Council as an employer, since it was approved on 1 October 2019.

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Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Update

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report provides an update on the progress made with the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan, for the Council as an employer, first approved by this Committee on 1 October 2019.
- 2.2 Key achievements since the last progress report to Committee includes:
- Steady progress evidenced through a second benchmarking exercise using the Employers Network for Equalities and Inclusion TIDE benchmarking tool;
 - Robust equalities data set from job applicant stage through employment and aligned to Scottish Government equalities data allowing national and inter-authority comparisons;
 - In addition to gender pay gap reporting, race and disability pay gap reporting for the first time providing a benchmark for future years and a starting point to review areas for improvement;
 - Offering a wide range of learning opportunities for employees and managers including anti-racist practice, cultural awareness and inclusive leadership as well as opportunities to attend immersive sessions with our selected provider, Human Library, to examine personal bias, both conscious and unconscious; and,
 - Reviewing existing policy and practice to refocus on 'Protecting colleagues in the workplace'.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and action plan were approved by this Committee on 1 October 2019 and an update on progress provided on 6th October 2020.
- 3.2 The strategy and action plan were developed by a focus group which has representation from elected members, trade unions and our colleague networks. This focus group continues to oversee the direction of the work in relation to diversity and inclusion and provide a steer in terms of ongoing priorities for us as a Council.

3.3 The strategy and action plan were reviewed by the Employers Network for Equalities and Inclusion (ENEI) and incorporate best practice advice and ideas from other external organisations such as Close the Gap, CoSLA, CEMVO (Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary) and other local authorities.

4. Main report

4.1 Our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy sets out our commitment as an employer to develop a truly inclusive culture and workplace; one which recognises and values the contribution that a diverse workforce makes. The action plan associated with the strategy has three strategic themes which inform the focus of our work. Each year, our priority areas for action will form the ‘building blocks’ within the themes that will help us create the diverse and inclusive workplace we aspire to.

4.3 The strategic themes and building blocks for 2020-2021 are shown below, along with progress against each theme.

Strategic Themes	Developing our understanding	Building an inclusive culture	Attracting and retaining a diverse workforce
Building Blocks	Review and refresh our L&D programme to strengthen our focus on equalities.	Engagement and collaboration with key partners to help us identify areas for improvement.	Consolidate and analyse recruitment data. Report outputs and target action.
	Campaign to raise awareness and increase rates of equalities data collection	Continue to promote and raise awareness of equalities issues. Focus on leadership and managers.	Become an employer of choice for under-represented groups.
Ensure we meet our Equal Pay commitments			

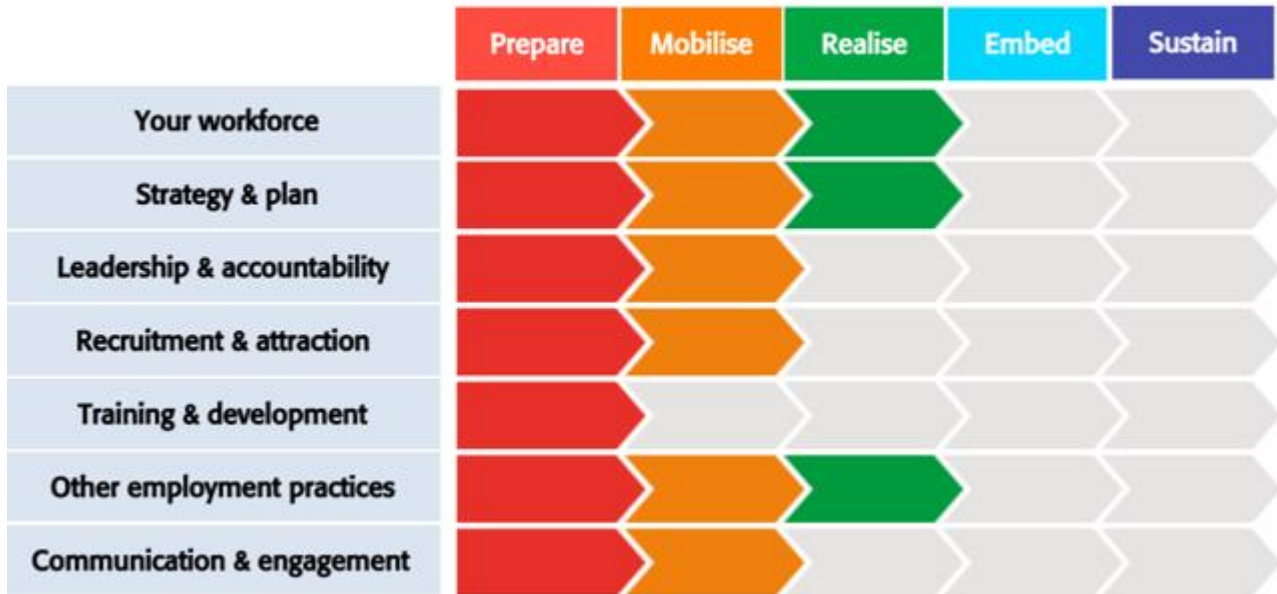
Developing our understanding

4.4 For the second time we have used the ENEI benchmarking tool, TIDE (Talent, Inclusion and Diversity Evaluation), to measure our progress against seven internally focussed areas: *your workforce; strategy and plan; leadership and accountability; attraction and recruitment; training and development; other employment practices; and communications and engagement*;. This is an online platform which provides a self-assessment tool onto which evidence is uploaded to support responses.

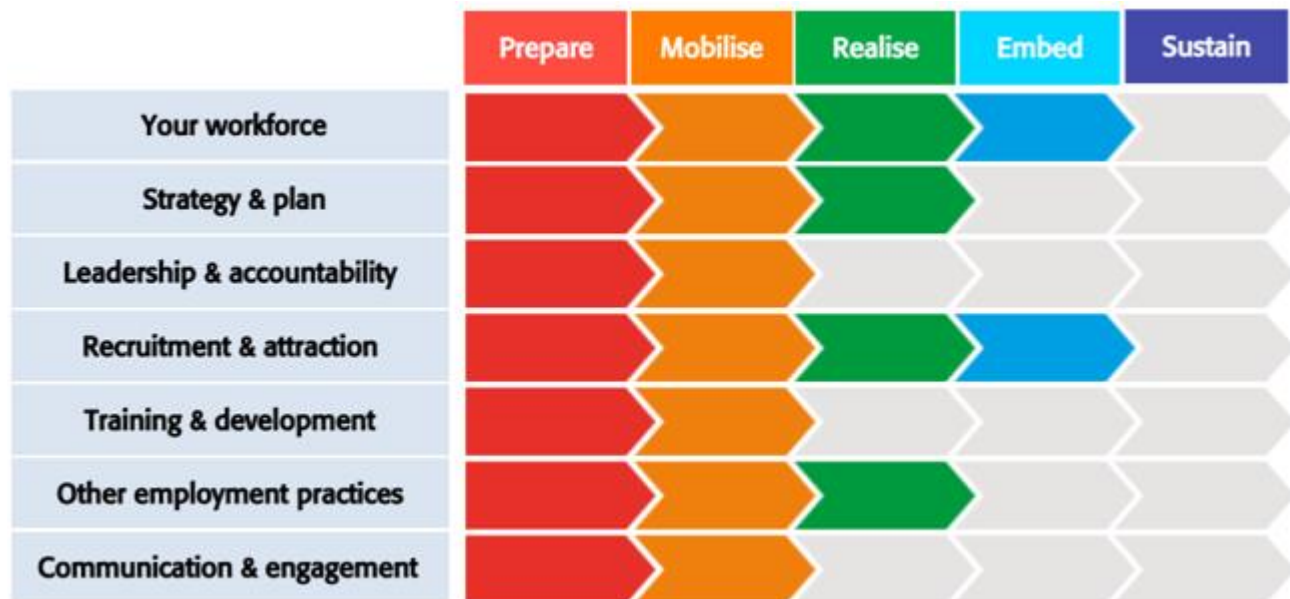
4.5 We have made significant progress in three areas, moving forward in status from ‘realise’ to ‘embed’ in relation to *your workforce* and *recruitment and attraction*, and from ‘prepare’ to ‘mobilise’ in terms of our *training and development*. Although we have maintained our status position in the other areas, ENEI recognise that we have, in percentage terms, progressed in an additional three of the remaining four areas.

4.6 To date we have prioritised actions which will positively impact colleagues within the Council or those joining the Council, however, the ENEI benchmarking tool also allows us the opportunity to assess our approach to procurement. We plan to work with Commercial and Procurement Services colleagues over the next 12 months and will benchmark ourselves against this theme in 2022.

2020 TIDE results



2021 TIDE results



4.7 One of our key priorities is to develop a greater understanding of the equalities profile of our workforce. A campaign to raise awareness about the importance of colleagues disclosing their diversity information commenced in November 2020 and will continue for a period of approximately 18 months, with the next focus of attention our colleagues in school settings.

4.8 We now use the same data set that the Scottish Government will use to collect equalities data for the Scottish Census. We have also secured agreement via CoSLA that Talentlink, the national recruitment portal for local authorities, will also use this data set. This will enable us to gain more robust insight around the recruitment process for candidates and colleagues who share a protected characteristic.

- 4.9 From 1st April 2021 all potential candidates are strongly encouraged to complete the equalities data questions as part of the recruitment process, being offered the option to answer 'prefer not to say' for each question. In this way, for the first time we have a complete picture of who we are attracting for posts, from a diversity perspective.
- 4.10 We can see from the changes to the data we hold that there is positive movement on non-disclosure rates of up to almost 7% (differing across data sets) which is encouraging. This figure does not reflect when colleagues have checked their data but made no material changes to the data we hold – only showing new or additional information.
- 4.11 We continue to have circa 5000 colleagues with no access to myHR, our HR system, which means they are unable to update their details personally. We have offered these colleagues alternative options to amend their details however the uptake has been low. We are also aware that numbers of colleagues in schools do not regularly use myHR as they work sessional hours. Part of our campaign to encourage people to update their details will target these colleagues specifically.
- 4.12 For the first time, we are gathering information about whether our colleagues have carer commitments and now know the carer status of 6.9% of colleagues. Understanding what the picture looks like for the carer population of our workforce may help to inform future policies around flexible working, special leave arrangements and other measures to support colleagues with work-life balance.
- 4.13 Our prejudice-based incident reporting system remains in place but reporting rates are low. Further activity is planned to ensure that colleagues are aware of the system and are encouraged and supported to speak up about unacceptable behaviour. Colleagues in the BAME Network are producing a short video for circulation as part of this awareness-raising activity.
- 4.14 For the first time, we've expanded our pay gap reporting to include pay gap analysis for additional protected characteristics including disability (and long-term health conditions) and race/ethnicity
- The race/ethnicity pay gap is currently 14.1% (based on current data held for 83% of all colleagues)
 - The disability pay gap is currently 7.0% (based on current data held for 80% of all colleagues)
- 4.15 We commit to expand the scope of this analysis to develop a more detailed understanding of what drives these pay gaps in relation to observations in the 2021 reporting, e.g. establishing what drives a higher disability pay gap for the Teaching population and differences between different ethnic minority groups.
- 4.16 We commit to ongoing regular analysis to understand changes to gaps as they happen. In the coming year, and as we enter a phase of organisational change and review, we will work to ensure pay gap analysis is embedded into the change impact assessment process.

Building an inclusive culture

- 4.17 We've been working (and will continue to work) in partnership with diversity and inclusion specialists including the Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations and Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights to review our approach to recruitment, attraction, data analysis and professional development. The insight we gain through data analysis will inform future actions to support the development of a more inclusive workplace.
- 4.18 The following networks are established and helping to shape the agenda for diversity and inclusion through membership of the focus group and a range of other initiatives, examples of which are given below:
- Network engagement for women's support;
 - SPARC network – supporting people's abilities regardless of circumstance;
 - Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic network;
 - Black and Minority Ethnic equality workers forum;
 - STRIDE network – LGBT+; and,
 - Sustainability network.
- 4.19 Our SPARC network for colleagues who consider themselves to have a disability or long-term health condition has produced advice for managers to help them take a supportive approach with people who have disabilities and long-term health conditions. The aim is to improve relationships, helping managers feel more confident approaching often unfamiliar or difficult subject matter.
- 4.20 Our BAME Network has surveyed its membership to gather information about real-life workplace experiences. This data will help to inform our approach to anti-racist practice, challenge bias in all its forms and provide better support to colleagues.
- 4.21 Guest speakers have attended network sessions, including the women's network and both BAME networks, to share their knowledge and experience of how best to promote the interests of key groups in the workplace.
- 4.22 We continue to use our inclusion calendar to highlight key dates of interest to communities who share a protected characteristic and the newly formed colleague networks are now taking a more active role in this activity.
- 4.23 We've secured a provider to offer a suite of on-line learning opportunities for up to 600 colleagues including:
- Anti-Racist practice;
 - Cultural Awareness;
 - Inclusive Leadership;
 - Introduction to EDI;
 - Inclusive Recruitment;
 - Inclusive Language;
 - Inclusive Communications;
 - Disability Awareness; and,
 - Trans Awareness.

- 4.24 We are offering 200 people managers the opportunity to focus on how they challenge and address their unconscious bias and support those in their teams to do the same by attending sessions hosted by the Human Library. At Human Library sessions, 'readers' hear from living 'books' about their experience as an individual with a protected characteristic or other attribute which may make them subject to prejudice-based behaviour.
- 4.25 We are developing a bespoke e-learning opportunity for all colleagues and new starts to set out our expectations around culture, attitudes and behaviour.
- 4.26 Guidance for managers supporting colleagues who are transitioning in the workplace has been developed and published.
- 4.27 Our SPARC network has surveyed their members to gather feedback on their experiences of working through the pandemic, both positive and negative. This information will be used to inform possible new ways of working to best support colleagues with diverse needs.

Attracting and retaining a diverse workforce

- 4.28 We've revamped our external 'Work for Us' webpage and our City of Edinburgh Council page on myjobScotland to use more inclusive language and to underline our commitment to attracting and retaining a diverse workforce.
- 4.29 We're developing a suite of recruitment videos featuring a diverse range of colleagues talking about the benefits of working for the Council to help attract a more diverse pool of candidates.
- 4.30 We've piloted unconscious bias training for colleagues and recruiting managers to raise awareness of bias and the impact that has on decision-making, particularly in a recruitment context. We're re-enforcing anti-racist practice to targeted teams and will provide a range of equalities, diversity and rights learning options to all colleagues across this year.
- 4.31 We're working with the Scottish Government, other local authorities and public sector organisations to target black and minority ethnic candidates for posts to seek to increase the applications and, ultimately increase our workforce representation.
- 4.32 We've reviewing our Violence at Work Policy and Toolkit and produced a 'Protecting Colleagues in the Workplace' policy and user guide. The new document has greater focus on the individual worker, risk assessment and what steps to take in response to an incident. It's anticipated that this Policy will be considered at Policy and Sustainability Committee in October 2020.
- 4.33 We're reviewing our recruitment policy and practice in line with the Scottish Government Minority Ethnic Recruitment Toolkit. Our aim is to attract more candidates from minority ethnic backgrounds to apply for positions within the Council; it will also help us identify and address any systems and structures in place that might pose a barrier to those from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- 4.34 We'll examine our recruitment process in detail to determine whether the process itself may have embedded practice or assumptions that could lead to unintended bias on the part of recruiting managers and inadvertently favour candidates from a non-

minority ethnic background. We'll engage with our colleague networks to inform this review.

- 4.35 We're piloting positive action measures in recruitment as a means of increasing the diversity of the teaching, youth work and early years workforce. These measures include diverse shortlists, diverse recruitment panels and the use of a 'tiebreak' to decide in favour of a stated protected characteristic between candidates with equivalent experience and performance at interview.
- 4.36 We're engaging with our colleague networks to seek the 'lived experience' of colleagues who have had adverse experiences in the workplace. The information we gather will be used to inform our approach to supporting and protecting colleagues in the workplace and will help our managers to provide the best possible support to colleagues delivering services across the city. For example, feedback gathered from colleagues with a long-term health condition or disability around the recruitment process will help us to develop a more inclusive approach to attraction and recruitment, as well as retaining more colleagues from diverse backgrounds.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 We will continue to use the three strategic themes of: developing our understanding; building an inclusive culture and; attracting and retaining a diverse workforce to direct the work of the action plan for 2021-2022.
- 5.2 The focus group comprising elected members, trade unions, network colleagues and officers will continue to meet to support the implementation of the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan.
- 5.3 Further work will continue over the next 12 months to embed the good work to date and to develop stronger relationships with our partners to put us in the best possible position to achieve our aims of a truly inclusive workplace culture.

6. Financial Impact

- 6.1 The budgetary implications of this strategy are contained within the Human Resources Divisional Budget and the Corporate Learning and Development Budget. In addition, Council approved an additional one-off investment of £100k to accelerate diversity and inclusion in the workplace related learning and development activities.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 The Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan was developed in collaboration with elected members, trade unions, colleague networks and other council officers.
- 7.2 The Council also seeks input from external partners such as the ENEI, Close the Gap and CRER, CEMVO, CoSLA as appropriate.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 [Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2020-2021](#)

9. Appendices

- 9.1 None