

# Policy and Sustainability Committee

10 am, Thursday, 22 August 2024

## Supporting the LGBT+ Community

Executive/routine  
Wards

### 1. Recommendations

---

- 1.1 To note the City of Edinburgh Council's progress towards:
  - 1.1.1 Tackling LGBT+ hate crime in partnership with community safety partners and Police Scotland
  - 1.1.2 Delivering actions from the Gender Recognition round table, to promote equality for the LGBT+ community
  - 1.1.3 Reviewing the potential changes to service delivery in line with the proposed Gender Recognition Reform Bill implementation, and the findings of the Cass Review (a full report due to the committee in October 2024)
- 1.2 To note that the ongoing development of this work will be taken forward within a new Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Framework 2024-29.

**Dr. Deborah Smart**

**Executive Director - Corporate Services**

Contact: Lucy Pearson, Lead Officer – Equalities

E-mail: [lucy.pearson@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:lucy.pearson@edinburgh.gov.uk) | Tel: 0131 123 4567

## Supporting the LGBT+ Community

### 2. Executive Summary

---

- 2.1 This report responds to an addendum raised by members at the March 2024 Policy and Sustainability Committee. It outlines the Council's partnership approach to tackling hate crimes and promoting equality for the LGBT+ community. It provides an additional update on the Council's commitment to understanding the impact of expected legislative changes (taking into consideration the delayed implementation of the Gender Recognition Reform Bill and the recent publication of the Cass Review) on LGBT+ communities and service delivery.

### 3. Background

---

- 3.1 In March 2024, the Policy and Sustainability Committee discussed a Celebrating Pride Report which described existing workstreams that support the LGBT+ community in Edinburgh.
- 3.2 In response to this report, Committee agreed on an addendum asking that:
- 3.2.1 a business bulletin be provided giving an overview of local pride activities across the city in May 2024, ahead of Pride Month in June 2024
- 3.2.2 a full report will be produced for Committee in August 2024, further expanding on part B of the original amendment:
- 3.2.2.1 b. "how the Council works with Police Scotland to tackle LGBTIQ+ hate crime;"; beyond our duties as a landlord surrounding antisocial behaviour, and an analysis of and reflections on the effectiveness of this partnership and work with other agencies to tackle LGBTIQ+ hate crime and;
- 3.2.2.2 the report would provide an update on progress towards agreed actions at the Gender Recognition Round Table, to understand steps taken to support the transgender community.

## 4. Main report

---

- 4.1 To better understand the challenges that the LGBT+ community is currently facing, officers have engaged with specialist organisations and conducted desk research into the needs of the LGBT+ community (Appendix 1) and the legislative landscape (Appendix 2). The latter has included the establishment of a working group to consider the impact of the current legislation on service delivery (Appendix 3)
- 4.2 An update on the progress of this group, will be reported to the October 2024 Policy and Sustainability Committee, as part of the previously requested Gender Recognition Reform Update report.

### **Tackling Hate Crime and Engagement with Police Scotland**

- 4.3 The Council is taking active steps to tackle LGBT+ Hate Crimes as mentioned in the [Celebrating Pride Month Report](#).
  - 4.3.1 The city has an established Joint Community Safety and Antisocial Behaviour Strategy governed by the Edinburgh Community Safety and Justice Partnership (ECSJP). ECSJP is one of the four partnership groups contributing to the Edinburgh Partnership's vision by working towards making communities safer and reducing reoffending.
  - 4.3.2 The council recognised the importance of a multi-agency approach to tackling hate crime and supporting victims. The ECSJP membership is made up of elected members and senior colleagues (from Children, Education and Justice Services and Place) from across the community planning environment e.g. Scottish Prison Service, Victim Support Scotland, Skills Development Scotland, Voluntary Organisations, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Police Scotland, NHS Lothian and Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership.
  - 4.3.3 ECJSP provides effective monitoring of the current strategy by quarterly update reports on the key priorities of the partnership. Key to the implementation of the above is the local multi-agency Community Improvement Partnerships (CIPs) which meet monthly to discuss any trends in reported crime and antisocial behaviour across localities (against all communities, including LGBT+).
  - 4.3.4 CIPs aim to take appropriate and proportionate action against those responsible when reviewing the case, to ensure the right level of response is taken i.e. support versus enforcement. Police Scotland has dedicated Diversity Officers who will work with citizens across the city and link in with the work of the CIPs, ensuring a robust multi-agency approach across local communities.
  - 4.3.5 In addition, where a citizen or family is affected by a hate crime and requires more intensive support beyond Council services, a referral is prioritised to a specialist partner organisation e.g. Victim Support Scotland or LGBT+ Health and Wellbeing across the city, or a health professional through NHS Lothian.

- 4.3.6 The Council's Family and Household Support Service provides a lived experience feedback loop to the ECJSP through quarterly resident forums. Ensuring that strategic decisions are underpinned by the experiences of the community (including LGBT+).
- 4.3.7 The Council is committed to supporting the needs of the gypsy travelling community through an [intersectional](#) lens, and a new officer has been appointed to support the needs of those in this community, further addressing stigma and hate crime.
- 4.3.8 Raising awareness of the impact of hate crimes and supporting young victims of hate crime, remains a priority of the ECJSP. This work is carried out in partnership with Police Scotland and specialist agencies recognising the intersectional needs of young people e.g. LGBT+ Youth Scotland, and Minority Ethnic Carers of People Project (MECOPP), the Lothian Association of Youth Club.
- 4.3.9 Police Scotland Link Officers are based full-time within each secondary school to effectively respond to any reported incidents among young people experiencing hate crimes. They also deliver prevention-led talks within Primary / Secondary Schools about the impact of hate crime.
- 4.3.10 The ECJSP is currently reviewing the [Joint Community Safety and Antisocial Behaviour Strategy](#), and it is anticipated that a multi-agency approach to tackling hate crime will be embedded throughout.

#### **Gender Recognition Round Table – Progress on Actions**

- 4.4 Several recommendations were developed at the Gender Recognition Roundtable in 2022 to further support the LGBT+ community across the city. Subsequent action has been taken to date as follows:
  - 4.4.1 The Council is engaged in the Stonewall Equality Benchmarking Index and recommendations from the Stonewall Equality Benchmarking report due in August 2024, will be considered in full.
  - 4.4.2 The launch of new *LGBT+ Awareness & Inclusion Training* for colleagues in June 2024 with 114 having completed this training to date. This e-learning was developed by people with lived experience (covering what LGBT+ means and why it matters, how to be an ally, and building an understanding of gender identity).
  - 4.4.3 A further 142 colleagues have completed the Council's new *Protecting our colleagues - how to support your LGBT+ colleagues in the workplace* training. This e-learning provides a practical guide for all colleagues to understand homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia.
  - 4.4.4 A review of IIA practice has taken place to ensure that an intersectional lens is applied when LGBT+ communities are assessed. This work includes:

- 4.4.4.1 Providing relevant LGBT+ training regarding Equality, Diversity and Rights Advisors across all service areas
- 4.4.4.2 Updating the IIA Supporting Information document to include information on intersectional evidence and findings from other consultations, that may impact the LGBT+ community
- 4.4.5 Officers raised awareness of the new requirement for voter ID for the General Election 2024 through a city-wide campaign – including social media posts, lamp post wraps, and information leaflets. In raising awareness of this change, it was anticipated that LGBT+ communities and others would be given notice, so they can successfully exercise their democratic rights.
- 4.4.6 The Council continues to support LGBT+ communities in schools through the [‘Preventing and Responding to Bullying and Prejudice’](#) procedure that sits under the Included Engaged Involved (IEI) policy, including guidance and support for parents and carers.
- 4.4.7 The Education Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan and the Edinburgh Learns Equalities Board expect to adopt a further intersectional approach inclusive of LGBT+ communities in due course and will reflect this within the revised Terms of Reference.
- 4.4.8 Education continues to celebrate LGBT+ inclusive education practices through school Equality Co-ordinator briefings, sharing good practice newsletters, and the annual Young People’s Equalities Event and Saroj Lal Awards. Alongside, the promotion of LGBT Youth Scotland’s celebration events and PRIDE Edinburgh, in addition to celebratory PRIDE events in schools.
- 4.4.9 Children, Education, and Justice Services has promoted and referred to the national ‘Supporting Transgender Pupil in Schools’ guidance since its publication in 2021 (note this is under review since the publication of the Cass Review).

## 5. Next Steps

---

- 5.1 Officers will continue to build upon a partnership approach to tackling LGBT+ hate crimes and any key findings from this work will underpin the development of the new EDI Framework, ensuring an intersectional approach to supporting the LGBT+ community in the city.
- 5.2 Officers will continue to monitor legislative changes that directly impact the LGBT+ community to ensure LGBT+ people are supported.
- 5.3 A full report on Gender Recognition Reform will be provided to the Policy and Sustainability Committee in October 2024.

## **6. Financial impact**

---

- 6.1 Actions arising from this report will require to be contained within existing budgets.

## **7. Equality and Poverty Impact**

---

- 7.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment will be developed for the new Equality and Diversity Framework driven by an intersectional approach, to which the needs of the LGBT+ community will be fully considered.
- 7.2 The work is relevant to our Public Sector Equality Duty, the development of the Equality and Diversity Framework, and our broader intention to better embed equality across service delivery, and become a prevention-led organisation.

## **8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications**

---

- 8.1 The ongoing impact of the climate emergency on LGBT+ communities is assessed via the IIA process.
- 8.2 A Just transition is how we get to a net zero and climate resilient economy, in a way that delivers fairness and tackles inequality and injustice. A just transition is underpinned by a fair distribution of the costs and benefits.
- 8.3 Anyone's health can be harmed by climate change, but some people and communities will be at greater risk. In Scotland, this is likely to include those from protected characteristic groups.
- 8.4 If people or communities experience multiple disadvantages, their risk will multiply. This will widen existing inequalities.

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

---

- 9.1 On-going engagement with LGBT+ communities and stakeholders is essential to tackling LGBT+ hate crime, and progress the development of the work set out in this report. This engagement will continue to help shape the Council's understanding of LGBT+ communities, and the challenges they face when accessing and engaging in services
- 9.2 Findings from any engagement will feed into the development and delivery of our current and new EDI Framework 2024-29.

## **10. Background reading/external references**

---

- 10.1 ([Public Pack](#))[Motions and Amendments Agenda Supplement for Policy and Sustainability Committee, 12/03/2024 10:00 \(edinburgh.gov.uk\)](#) – original Green Group Amendment from March 2024 (changed to an Addendum during committee).

- 10.2 [6.1 Business Bulletin May 2024.pdf \(edinburgh.gov.uk\)](#) outlining Pride Activities across Pride Month in 2024.
- 10.3 [7.11 Gender Recognition Reform.pdf \(edinburgh.gov.uk\)](#) – original Gender Recognition Reform Report.
- 10.4 [\(Public Pack\)Deputations Agenda Supplement for Policy and Sustainability Committee, 24/10/2023 10:00 \(edinburgh.gov.uk\)](#) – Deputation from LGBT Youth Scotland, in relation to the Gender Recognition Reform Report.
- 10.5 [Item 8.8 Pride motion report V2.pdf \(edinburgh.gov.uk\)](#) – Original Pride Motion Report from March 2024.
- 10.6 [Gender recognition: letter to the Secretary of State for Scotland - 21 January 2023 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 10.7 [Scottish Gender Identity Services - Scottish Trans](#)
- 10.8 [Final Report – Cass Review](#)
- 10.9 [1. Introduction, purpose and context - Sex, gender identity, trans status - data collection and publication: guidance - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 10.10 [lgbtyouth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/life-in-scotland-for-lgbt-young-people-2022-e-use.pdf](#)
- 10.11 [Community Safety Strategy](#)
- 10.12 [Scottish Government Hate Crime Strategy Scotland](#)

## 11. Appendices

---

Appendix 1: Background evidence on challenges faced by the LGBT+ community

Appendix 2: The Legislative Landscape

Appendix 3: Working Group - Gender Recognition and Service Delivery

### **Appendix 1: Background evidence on challenges faced by the LGBT+ community**

Officers have engaged with [LGBT Health and Wellbeing](#), [Victim Support Scotland](#), [Scottish Community Safety Network](#), [Equality Network](#) and [Scottish Trans](#). Findings from these conversations broadly found that:

Inequality amongst the LGBT+ community continues to exist, and more multi-agency action is needed to ensure the inclusion, well-being, and safety of the community across the city. The Equality Network’s Response to the Human Rights Bill for Scotland Consultation highlights that ‘Issues are experienced as an LGBTI+ person in relation to minority stress, housing conditions, the ‘cost-of-living crisis, a lack of access to appropriate healthcare, and prejudice and discrimination within mainstream health care institutions.’

The LGBT Health and Wellbeing [Fit for Purpose](#) report highlights the specific needs of the older members of the LGBT+ community, in regards to housing and social care highlighting the intersectional needs of the community.

The stigma around transgender people continues to exist, and it is having a profound impact on the daily lives of the LGBT+ community. The Equality Rights Network's Response to the Human Rights Bill for Scotland Consultation explains 'Another respondent told us that, due to the current 'debate' surrounding trans rights, they experienced panic attacks and physical sickness, while one other said that their anxiety was heightened in public and social spaces, as they felt like they needed to be on alert for transphobic attitudes.'

Scottish Trans found in their "Scottish Trans and non-binary experiences survey 2023" that trans people felt less positively about their neighbourhoods than the general population. 23% felt that being trans had only negative impacts on their experiences of their neighbourhoods. Some of the main reasons given by respondents to explain this was feeling afraid, uncertain or unsafe in their neighbourhood, facing abuse, harassment or violence, or being subjected to stares or negative comments.'

Edinburgh based organisation, LGBT+ Health and Wellbeing highlighted the mental health challenges that the LGBT+ community are currently facing in the city (please note, all the issues/challenges are particularly prevalent for the trans and non-binary community). Their [Manual for Me](#) suicide prevention toolkit for LGBT+ people states 'Research shows LGBTQ+ people are at much higher risk of suicide and self-harm and this is increasing. In our most recent survey of our Edinburgh community members, 60% said suicidal thoughts were an issue for them (an increase from 49% in the previous survey) and 57% said self-harm was an issue (increased from 53%). Similarly, the 2023 Life in Scotland Health Report by LGBT Youth Scotland reported that 50% of respondents had experienced suicidal thoughts or actions.'

[LGBT Youth Scotland](#) highlights that the delayed implementation of the Gender Recognition Bill has seen a rise in online trolling, impacting the well-being of young people from the LGBT+ community.

Police Scotland data highlights an increase in reporting of LGBT+ hate crime incidents since the implementation of the Hate Crime Bill this year. With 42 reports of transgender hate crimes reported between 1 April 2024 – 19 May 2024 across Scotland. An increase from 25 across the whole of 2023-24. And 306 reports of sexual orientation hate crimes across Scotland were recorded between 1 April 2025 and 19 May 2024, an increase from 196 across the year before.

## **Appendix 2: The Legislative Landscape**

There has been a delay in implementing The [Gender Recognition \(Scotland\) Bill](#) and there is currently no published guidance around the impact of any expected changes for local authorities consideration to support LGBT+ communities during this period.



NHS England commissioned the [Cass Review](#) to make recommendations on how to improve NHS gender identity services, and ensure that children and young people who are questioning their gender identity or experiencing gender dysphoria receive a high standard of care, that meets their needs, is safe, holistic and effective.

The recommendations of The Cass Review are still being considered nationally, and it is anticipated that NHS Scotland and The Scottish Government will guide local authorities in due course.

Despite the delays above, the Council remains fully committed to supporting the LGBT+ community by:

- Understanding the impact of the future legislative changes on Council services and the impact on LGBT+ communities it supports (for example, the use of single-sex spaces for the transgender community).
- Understanding the ongoing needs of the LGBT+ community and considering how Council systems, processes, and partnerships in the city can promote inclusion for all, as well as tackling LGBT+ hate crimes.

### **Appendix 3: Working Group - Gender Recognition and Service Delivery**

Officers met to review the impact of the delayed implementation of The Gender Recognition Reform Bill (on both the LGBT+ community and the delivery of council services) and the recent publication of the Cass Review (on young people and the impact this has on particularly Children, Education, and Justice Services).

Chaired by the Executive Director of Corporate Services with attendance from colleagues from Corporate Services and Children, Education, and Justice, the group agreed on an initial plan to review:

- what legislation and guidance is currently in place to support the Council to effectively support LGBT+ communities when accessing and engaging in our services (during this interim period), and;
- any changes to UK and Scottish Government legislation (as they arise), to ensure the Council is compliant and prepared to implement any changes to service delivery as required.