

*Working for
Warwickshire*

Warwickshire County Council Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

August 2020

1. Context

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) understands that equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is not only the 'right thing to do', it's good for business. The Council also has legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty (see [more](#)).

The effective delivery of EDI within WCC is everybody's business, but specific responsibility rests with elected members, senior leaders and line managers. All WCC employees are encouraged to demonstrate commitment to EDI in the performance of their duties and in their professional relationships with service users, colleagues and partners.

The Council annually reports on the diversity of its workforce and gender pay gap figures. For 2019-2020, we have expanded our reporting to include our ethnicity pay gap figures. This also looks at our turnover and promotion rates by protected characteristics. This insight, alongside other data, including but not limited to, the annual Your Say survey, qualitative data captured through a range of channels (e.g. Staff Networks, Employee Forums, focus groups etc.), supports us in setting our actions and measuring our progress. Our annual workforce, gender and ethnicity pay gap reports can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

We recognise that individuals and communities are different and by embracing and celebrating that diversity we're able to reflect and serve our customers and communities better. In understanding the profile of our customers and citizens, we use information provided by Warwickshire Insights, in particular, information on the profile of people living within the district and boroughs to give deeper insights and inform decision-making.

The Council invests in the Warwickshire Pan Equalities Service – contract currently held by EQUIP (until 31st March 2022). The Service works towards the elimination of unlawful discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different groups under each of the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010 within and across the Public and Third Sectors. Below are the current outcomes:

Outcome 1: Improved community cohesion and equality within Warwickshire.

Outcome 2: People living or working in Warwickshire feel that their voices are heard, and they have influence in local decision making.

Outcome 3: People living or working in Warwickshire are safe and protected from harm and are able to remain independent for longer.

WCC is also a Disability Confident Employer (Level 2) and a member of Inclusive Employers (see [more](#)).

Our EDI vision, 'Warwickshire County Council, a place where everyone feels **valued, included, safe, supported** and **welcome**', places our approach to inclusivity at the heart of everything we do.

We want our Employees to feel... Valued, included, safe, supported, welcome and that they can reach their potential no matter what their background.	We want our Communities to feel... Safe, supported and that when they interact with Warwickshire County Council in whatever capacity, that they consistently receive a dedicated, inclusive and accessible service.	We want our Members to feel... Included and supported by this action plan. Leveraging support from Members where possible will enhance our external reputation and internal profile.
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2. Why we have an Action Plan

Our action plan is a clear declaration of our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), governed by the How We Work Board and Change Portfolio Board. The Council EDI Group is responsible for driving this action plan forward. To find out more about our governance click [here](#).

It is supported by a number of strategies, including Our People Strategy and our Council Plan 2020-25. To achieve Our People Vision, '**Warwickshire County Council, a great place to work with outstanding leadership, and a talented, agile workforce**', we recognise that diversity and inclusion across the Council plays a role in this and that we all have different talents, different attributes and bring different skills to the table, and without this we won't be able to develop, adapt, innovate and progress. EDI plays an important role in delivering the outcomes of the Our People Strategy such as: -

- **‘Our people are diverse, feel that they belong and can bring their whole self to work’**
- **‘We will listen, learn and act to create an inclusive organisation with a sustainable and resilient workforce’**
- **‘We will break down barriers to enable a collaborative, innovative and accountable environment’**
- **‘Our offer enables us to attract, retain, engage and motivate a diverse and talented workforce’**
- **‘Our people are celebrated for their diversity and bring the capabilities and behaviour to drive a high-performance culture’**

The Council recognises that throughout the organisation there are pockets of great work being undertaken in relation to EDI, this action plan ensures that there is an integrated, proactive approach to EDI that meets the Council’s Public Sector Equality Duty, is informed by sector best practice and supports the achievement of the Council’s values, behaviours and objectives.

3. What progress have we made?

We have made progress in co-ordinating our work through strengthening our corporate oversight in this area through the reformed Council EDI Group, developing an action plan aligned to Our People Strategy, and equipping and empowering our Senior Leadership team to be able to support the Council in effectively delivering a change in culture and mindset through a range of inputs at Senior Leadership Forum.

In October 2019 we participated in the Inclusive Employers Standard in which we received Bronze, alongside 70% of other organisations who also took part. This is a positive base on which to grow and we have evidence of how we can progress to the next level and beyond. More importantly the standard has enabled us to measure and further improve the progress we are making toward becoming a more inclusive employer by providing us with a clear indication of both our strengths and areas for improvement from an external view.



We are currently working towards our Level 3 Disability Confident Accreditation and the Council has also launched our own Supported Internships Scheme to enable young people aged 16-24 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) to




achieve sustainable paid employment, by equipping the young person with skills needed for work, through learning in the workplace through a structured study programme based within the Council.


Task and Finish sub-groups will be developed at different frequencies to deliver on objectives to ensure we move with purpose.

4. WCC's Action Plan

Underneath our high-level objectives sit a range of key milestones to support us in achieving them.

Our People Strategy Building Block	No .	Objective	Expected Outcomes
Culture, Values and Behaviour 	1.	Provide a diverse range of education and training opportunities related to EDI for staff to access.	Staff are aware and actively engage in WCC's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion, understand their responsibilities and feel they can act accordingly with confidence to promote the development of a more inclusive culture, improving our overall performance.
	2.	Continue to actively support a range of local and national diversity and inclusion events and activities.	Increase in the profile of WCC's commitment to EDI.
Leadership 	3.	Harness the collective knowledge and experience of our service users, employees and partners through collaborative working to enable learning and tackle the issues that affect us all.	Increase in engagement, partnership working and understanding of equality issues, enabling the Council to act.

	4.	Ensure each employee has at least one objective in their Appraisal, in the period 2020-2025, which explicitly supports the Council's EDI ambitions.	Appraisals inform development.
	5.	Develop a Warwickshire Equality Charter with other organisations to help improve equality, diversity and inclusion across Warwickshire.	Organisations have the resources, information and support to help improve equality, diversity and inclusion across Warwickshire.
Organisational Design 	6.	Review and develop current practices in relation to policies, processes and services, including the commissioning of services.	WCC has robust mechanisms in place to make sure our policies, processes and services, including commissioned services, are inclusive.
Performance 	7.	Ensure we have the infrastructure in place which to provide accurate data to inform our decision making and measure our progress.	WCC can identify key issues and measure progress in relation to EDI.
Reward and Recognition 	8.	Continue to recognise and highlight opportunities and the success of EDI initiatives and people.	Increase in employee engagement and motivation.
Talent Development and Career Opportunities	9.	Ensure all our learning and development is increasingly accessible and inclusive.	WCC offers every employee fair training and development opportunities.
	10.	Review and develop current practices in relation to attraction, recruitment and development.	WCC's workforce represents the diversity of Warwickshire at all levels within the organisation and there are no barriers to progression for different groups, resulting in increased performance.

<p>Talent development and career opportunities</p> 	11.	Explore and analyse possible options for advancement at all stages of employee journeys.	WCC's workforce represents the diversity of Warwickshire at all levels within the organisation and there are no barriers to progression for different groups, resulting in increased performance.
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