

Sheffield City Council

Annual Equality Report Summary

April 2021 to July 2022

Our [Annual Equality Report](#) provides an overview of how we are meeting our Public Sector Duties including our Equality Objectives. The [Equality Act 2010 and associated Public Sector Duties \(PSED\)](#) require us to pay due regard to three areas:

- To **eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation**, and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- To **'take forward (advance) equality of opportunity'** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- To **'foster good relations'** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

We understand that we need assess the potential impacts on how we deliver our Services to our diverse City. This involves looking at evidence, engaging and building relationships with all communities, staff, partnerships, customers, stakeholders, and service providers across the city.

Our [Equality Objectives](#) demonstrate our commitment to challenging inequality and promoting a fair and inclusive city. We now have 5 Objectives, each with a set of 3 more specific aims. This summary provides a short overview of the priorities and actions necessary for the year 2022 – 23 which are detailed in the full report.

The release of data from the Census 2021 will be invaluable as we develop our services for the future. This is vital to the work we undertake to achieve Objective 1, Strengthening Knowledge and Understanding of Our Communities. The new data will help us to know more about the people of Sheffield and this is a key opportunity to use the data to support service planning, service redesign and respond to different needs. We will also use this data in key areas such as adult social care, disability services, children and family services, education, housing, neighbourhood services, our recreation services such as playgrounds, country walkways, sports and leisure centres, and our City Futures services.

Over the next year, the release of more granular census data will allow us to understand in more detail than ever before, people who live in Sheffield. It will be possible to look at a range of characteristics, the geographical distribution of different communities and intersectionality across all the protected characteristics as set in our Equality Act 2010. This will help us to understand our diverse communities further and the changes in these communities over the last decade.

Objective 1: Strengthening knowledge and understanding of our communities

We will improve our collection of equality monitoring information, so we know who are accessing our services. There is a lack of consistency, and we need to ensure the better collection, analysis, and use of this data to ensure that we are being proactive and can identify barriers to customers. This will ensure that they receive the services they are entitled and are not disadvantaged in any way. We recognise equality information is important to address to disparities in services we provide or commission. Our forthcoming actions will include:

- Developing a new data warehouse bringing the data we have together and understand where we collect EDI data on customers/service users and identify gaps in this collection.
- Utilising Customer Services' equalities monitoring pilot to offer practical ways for services to develop how we ask for, monitor, and respond to people's equalities data and information.
- Working to assess the changes in the diversity of Sheffield following the 2021 Census so we can build services that are fit for the future, are fair, accessible, and inclusive.
- Continuing to strengthen our relationship with our communities and partners, so we have better information to deliver joined up services for the big challenges ahead.
- Developing our new engagement platform 'Have Your Say Sheffield' to help ensure we hear a variety of voices both online and in person in the most effective way for people.
- Developing our Equality Impact Assessment process and auditing. This is to ensure they are completed at the beginning of the process for Council decisions to mitigate negative impact on customers and staff to better inform decision making that is fair and transparent. Offering training and new guidance to ensure consistency. This will better support services and support decision makers to better understand looking at proposals through different lenses, to aid the writing of EIAs and action plans.

Objective 2: Ensure our workforce reflects the people we serve

We have identified a need to focus our actions especially on disability and race. We will look at our workplace culture and practices to build an inclusive workforce that is reflective of our city and the customers we serve for future years. Our actions will include:

- Developing a comprehensive staff survey to better understand the needs of our diverse staff groups including equality monitoring questions assessing satisfaction levels of different groups of employees.

- Retaining our Disability Confident Employer status and to look at actions within this accreditation.
- Taking a deeper look at data relating to all HR Practices to de-bias our systems and processes reducing barriers and inequalities and carry actions.
- Reviewing and refreshing our employee Dignity & Respect and Grievance policy and procedures.
- Taking findings from the new Census, workforce data and look appropriate benchmarking with other councils and core cities
- Developing evidence based positive action at all levels in recruitment and career progression working towards having a workforce reflective of our city and the customers we serve.
- Looking at our apprenticeship offer in our workforce and manage this activity further to mitigate disadvantages.
- Improving staff engagement including staff networks, so they are fit for purpose and offer valuable engagement activity.
- Creating opportunities for employees to feedback to learn from their lived experiences so we can make the Council a more inclusive place to work.
- Investing and improving the offer of EDI training and development for all employees including prioritising senior level and service specific training and sharing awareness raising learning

Objective 3: Lead the City in celebrating diversity and promoting inclusion

We are committed to sharing awareness days and events around to City to promote inclusiveness and being an accessible city for all. Further actions are to include:

- Develop and refocus the Equality Partnership and the new engagement platform Have your Say Sheffield to help ensure we hear a variety of voices both online and in person in the most effective way for people.
- Work together with our partners on, relevant duties, standards and awareness events to ensure sharing good practice and learning through others.
- Work with services to ensure our commissioning and procurement processes are fair and inclusive, enhancing EDI within the Ethical Procurement Policy.
- Work with services to ensure the effectiveness of taking poverty measures are fair and inclusive for those that need support.
- Further at developing the usage of Sheffield City Council's accessibility guides.
- Address issues of accessibility in relation to translation, interpretation including British Sign Language and easy read.

Objective 4: Break the cycle of inequality and improve life chances

We know that campaigns undertaken have had significant impact and value such as the Ask Angela and Purple Flag and the work required to get White Ribbon accreditation and will continue to develop this work. We will also:

- Work with services to report on decent, inclusive, and accessible housing that promotes wellbeing for all.
- Focus on how we are reducing health inequalities especially for groups of people who share characteristics that experience poorer outcomes.
- Support work further on our Early Year's strategy enabling good health and wellbeing.
- Work with services to ensure service plans reflect the aims in the equality objectives and will monitor progress.

Objective 5: Becoming an Anti-racist City

We will build an inclusive, anti-racist culture so that Sheffield City Council is fair, open, welcoming, and great place to work, and that staff feel empowered to make the best contribution they can to the organisation. We will focus on the 3 key areas which underpin the other areas:

- a Building a more inclusive culture via learning, development, and awareness.
- b De-biasing our systems and processes to reduce barriers and inequalities.
- c Improving our data collection, sharing and analysis.

Specific actions will include:

- Ensuring staff have regular training and these learning is specific and tailored around our diverse customers. Topics such as anti-racism, cultural competencies, and cultural humility will be included encouraging conversations about race.
- Educate future generations and building leadership in education.
- Producing an ethnicity focused report in addition to the overall workforce equality report with relevant actions to enable transparency and support all managers to know and understand their services' data and ethnicity profile.
- Analyse the ethnicity pay data exploring pay gap information necessary to shape ongoing equality measures and interventions.
- Undertake a baseline assessment of the data we collect, understand where we collect EDI data on customers/service users and identify gaps.
- Develop and launch a new EIA platform, guidance and training and ensure EIAs are carried out for all proposals, projects and processes at the beginning, so to inform the decision making, and ensure EIA auditing.
- Improving our engagement to help build trust with our diverse communities.
- Reviewing our commissioning and funding arrangements
- Reviewing our Housing Strategy
- Building inclusive and healthy communities and reducing health inequalities and support Black, Asian, and Minoritised Ethnic businesses.

Next Steps and key areas of focus

We will refresh the Equality Objectives in 2023 ensuring they align with SCC plans and strategies such as the Council plan and City Goals. We will report on key areas below to ensure we are meeting our Equality Objectives and the Public Sector Equality Duty and report on these developments in our next Annual Equality Report.

We have listed recommendations for 2022/23 under each equality objective as outlined in the main report and these cover 6 key areas of focus in the next year.

- a. Better data collection, analysis and use of service equality monitoring information.
- b. Work with services to ensure service plans reflect equality goals and commitments.
- c. Utilise EIAs more effectively and robustly, ensuring they are undertaken at the right time with good evidence and in a proportionate way.
- d. Strengthen relationships with and understanding of the diverse communities within the city both online and in person across all characteristics.
- e. Carry out staff surveys to assess the morale of the workforce including assessing satisfaction levels of different groups of employees.
- f. Develop a more inclusive culture within the Council including via learning & development for staff and Members.