



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

Annual Report

April 2022-March 2023

Introduction

In August 2022, we published our external [EDI Action Plan](#) which showcased our commitment to EDI development for our workforce and more widely on resident engagement over the next 12 months.

This was the 'public face' of our delivery plan, which focussed not only on embedding the progress achieved to date, but also focused on developing key areas for 2022-2023.



Action Plan

Our EDI action plan for 2022-2023 focused on four main areas, including 3 new themes:



Continuing to embed the progress made to date.



Further development of the training, advice and support available to embed an inclusive culture.



Develop our recruitment and retention practices to increase the diversity of our workforce.



Develop our capabilities to engage with residents from a diversity of backgrounds and experience.

This report summarises the progress we have delivered against these actions during 2022-2023, with particular thanks to our EDI staff network co-chairs, EDI steering group and volunteers from within the 4 EDI networks who have helped to drive this work forward over the last year.

Outcomes

Since the launch of the 2022-2023 EDI action plan, we have completed the following deliverables throughout the year, working to further establish and embed our position on the importance of EDI and making progress on our organisational aims.





Work delivered to embed the progress delivered to date

- Saw over 250 staff have now joined our four EDI staff networks (Race Equality, LGBT+, Carers and Disability and Wellness). The networks continue to provide a safe and confidential environment for personal and strategic development and feed into our EDI steering group to develop operational documents and internal policies.
- Published our Workforce Diversity data report and identifying priorities for the coming year. We saw increases in staff data declarations, demonstrating that staff are engaged in our work around EDI and feel empowered to share this information.
- Marched in London Pride 2022, represented by our LGBT+ staff network and allies.
- Been recognised this year as the PRCA Workplace Inhouse Team Champions Award for our internal communications. This recognised our deliverer of a number of high-profile EDI campaigns, including Neurodiversity Week, LGBT history Month, PRIDE, Inclusion Week, Carers Week (with Carers Bucks) and Race Equality Week. Campaigns included EDI blogs and podcasts, ensuring staff voice was heard across the organisation.
- Delivered EDI tea break talks, and training on EqIA completion, Neurodiversity Week and Carers Rights Day, continuing to keep EDI as a priority subject for staff development.



Work delivered to embed the progress delivered to date *(continued)*

- In addition, we maintained regular communications in our all staff and managers briefings to ensure that EDI remains an ongoing topic for learning and conversation.
- Published an annual workforce data report to demonstrate our regard to the PSED. Work to improve the data we hold has been established.
- Received a Silver Tidemark Award from ENEI, demonstrating our high level of work and ongoing commitment to improvement, showing progression from the Bronze we were awarded previously.
- Published a reasonable adjustments toolkit to support our staff with disabilities to request adjustments in the workplace. This also includes guidance for managers to ensure the process is both supportive and consistent, and encouraging early conversations to help staff to work at their best. This new process is remaining under review so we can measure its and continue to look at ways to improve the process.
- Delivered a Reverse Mentoring Programme with a focus on racial equality. Eleven pairs (including members of CMT) have participated.
- Delivered in-person EDI training sessions to 68 managers, raising awareness of the benefits of diversity within the workplace and exploring how to proactively promote equality and tackle discrimination.



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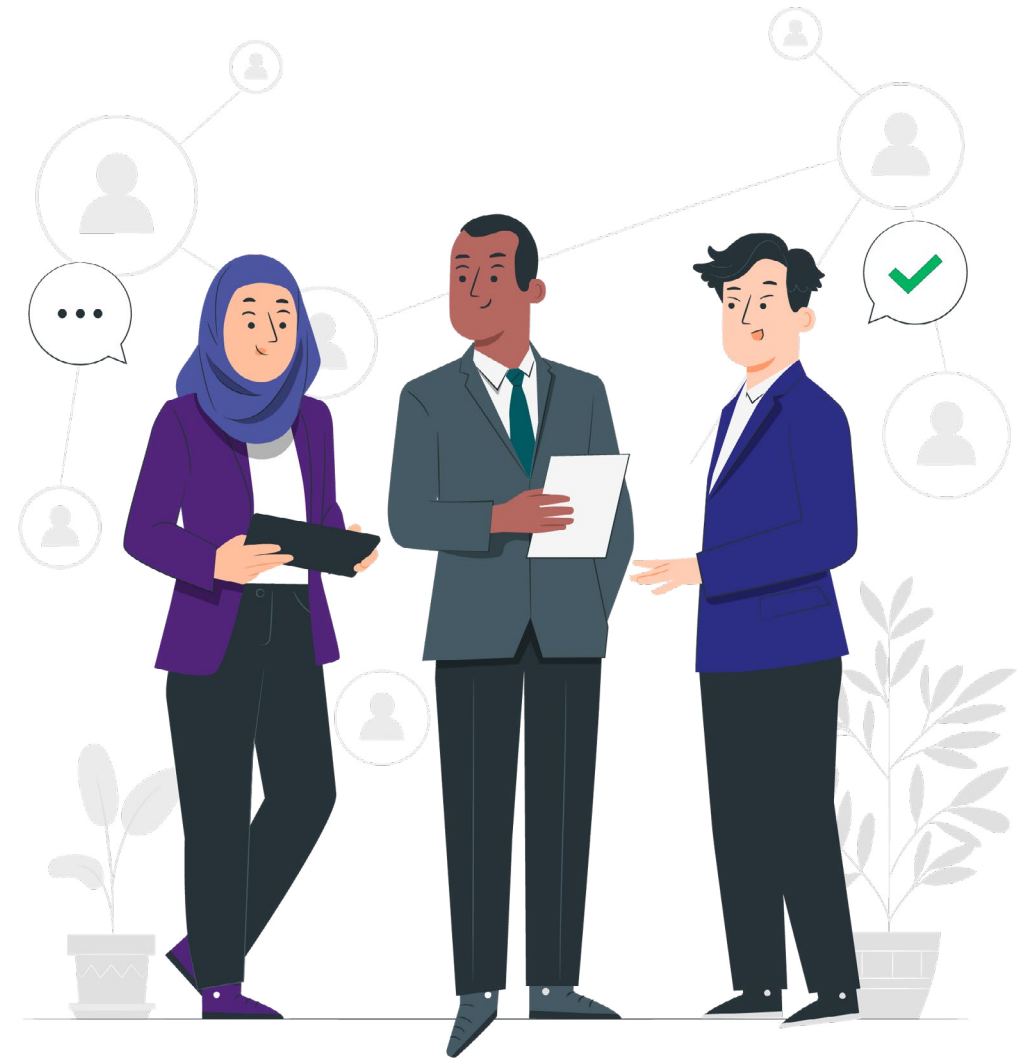
Further development of the training, advice and support available to embed an inclusive culture

- Reviewed and implemented changes to our mandatory EDI training, with it included on our new 3-year mandated training cycle for all staff.
- Adopted an internal Carers Charter to ensure carers can flourish within our workforce and managers and colleagues better understand the support we should consider for those with caring responsibilities.
- Added further reference to equality, diversity, and inclusion within our annual review framework (C4P) guidance for both staff and managers, including promoting conversations about flexibilities and adjustments, training and development opportunities and recognising and understanding the barriers people might need support to overcome.
- Published 20 bitesize training videos for staff around equalities. Topics include allyship, intersectionality, cultural awareness, and inclusive communication.
- Improved our offer as an employer by launching a new staff network for the armed forces community as well as establishing an Early Careers staff network, plus a SEND parent support group.
- Delivered 'Managing Hybrid Teams' workshops for 32 managers as part of the Being a Bucks Manager programme, with the content now included in new our manager training.
- Incorporated references to EDI within our interactive new joiner guide and added an EDI video as part of our in-person corporate induction

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Develop our recruitment and retention practises to increase the diversity of our workforce

- Published an inclusion statement on our recruitment webpages to demonstrate our commitment to potential employees and developed a toolkit for managers on inclusive recruitment processes.
- Developed new accessible job programmes based on best practice which are due to launch this year, as well as embedding wider principles of job design within our service review process.
- Saw an increased number of job applications from applicants from underrepresented groups.
- Delivered a targeted information sharing session about our Coaching Pool for our Race Equality Staff network, with the aim of increasing the uptake of coaching opportunities by staff from under represented groups.
- Launched a Talent Academy Steering Group, who priorities include progression planning and retention as well as alternative recruitment and employment methods.



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Develop our capabilities to engage with residents from a diversity of backgrounds and experience

- Improved staff data submission and quality, including amendments to categories on SAP to allow staff to identify more appropriately. We have seen an increase in declarations over the last year, with data on ethnicity and religion seeing the highest increases.
- Identified categories of staff data we would seek to include when technology permits, including information around carers responsibilities and armed forces links.
- Identified ways of breaking EDI staff data down to directorate and service level.
- Produced a second Workforce Profile data report for publication in May 2022, comparing data over the past 2 years.
- Delivered an all staff survey about equalities and self-identification, which was completed by over 1500 staff members.
- Developed a regular EDI reporting & monitoring score card.
- Developed data reports for each directorate and service looking at the makeup of the workforce.



Conclusions

As we move into 2023-2024, we are looking to further implement equalities into the culture of the Council and underpin the strategic imperative and achievements we have established over the last 12 months. As such we will be publishing our 2023-2024 Action Plan shortly, with a continued focus on internal progression whilst also looking at how we can support residents within Buckinghamshire, improving opportunities for all but especially for those experiencing hardship.

Our new action plan will drive the next stage of developments in partnership with the staff networks and the EDI steering group, seeking to further establish our organisation as a place where staff from all back grounds and cultures want to work and grow.

