

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (ED&I) Action Plan – 2026-2027

The main areas of the government's Indicators of Integration have been incorporated into this plan to build on the community integration and cohesion work that is carried out by the council on an on-going basis.

EP1: Listen to and learn from communities that we serve.

Ref No.	Action	Monitoring Criteria	Service Lead	When
1.1	Through the EDI working group we will develop and implement organisation wide guidance to ensure all engagement activities are inclusive, accessible, and proactively reach diverse and seldom heard communities. This will include tracking participation by demographic groups and using targeted outreach to support equitable involvement, including in neighbourhood plan consultations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance produced and adopted. Evidence of increased engagement 	Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Working Group	03/2027
1.2	Develop guidance and a simple template to support service areas in collecting customer feedback and monitoring complaints/compliments by protected characteristics and offer support to any service choosing to adopt this approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular feedback reports produced 	PMO and Improvement/ Customer Service	03/2027
1.3	Support local forums and community groups to deliver accessible, inclusive activities, strengthen community relations, remain sustainable, and reflect local diversity, including promoting diverse trustee boards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of groups supported. Community feedback from supported group 	Connected Communities	03/2027
1.4	We will improve the quality and use of equalities data across the organisation by establish what data is being collected across our services and explore how we can share relevant and proportionate equalities data through the EDI working group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared understanding of what data is being collected. Improved consistency in equalities data from services 	Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Working Group	03/2027
1.5	<p>The council will continue to strengthen the quality and monitoring of Equality Impact Assessments by ensuring actions and mitigations are clearly tracked, reviewed, and used to understand impacts on different communities. We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve consistency and quality through updated guidance, templates, and training for officers. Introduce regular review points to track progress and update actions as needed. Strengthen oversight by assigning clear ownership and timelines for each action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number and quality of EIAs produced. EIA actions and mitigations tracked through a clear process. 	Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Working Group	03/2027

EP2: Deliver accessible and inclusive services, facilities and information that meet diverse needs of communities.

Ref No.	Action	Monitoring Criteria	Service Lead	When
2.1	<p>Enhance the accessibility and quality of support provided across front-line services, ensuring residents can receive the help they need in ways that work for them. We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve support for benefit claimants, • Delivering in person and evening debt surgeries • Strengthen interpreter and translation provision, • Provide accessible and alternative formats for our customers. • Expanding appointment-based support where needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased uptake of support services (e.g., debt surgeries, benefit support) • Improved access for residents needing interpreters/alternative formats. • Customer feedback indicating improved accessibility. 	<p>Benefits Revenue Customer Service Corporate Comms</p>	03/2027
2.2	<p>Support residents most vulnerable to climate-related health impacts through accessible advice on fuel poverty, energy efficiency and climate risks, and publish a climate vulnerability report to guide service and policy design.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of households supported through energy/ fuel poverty initiatives. 	Climate Change and Sustainability	03/2027
2.3	<p>Our streets, open spaces, play park areas, countryside, and council owned community facilities/assets are accessible and inclusive as we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake specific cleaning and maintenance enhancements around the borough to make sure streets are clean and clear of hazards. • Ensure that all improvements to play areas and new play park designs are accessible. • Offer Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) to enable essential home adaptations. • Ensure Council-owned community facilities/assets are as accessible as possible to people with a range of access needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptations are made to improve accessibility of council-owned community buildings, play, and park areas • Feedback from residents, • Regular maintenance reports showing streets and pathways kept clean and free of hazards 	<p>Property and Community teams Parks and Streetscene Regulatory Service</p>	03/2027
2.4	<p>Support and encourage residents to be active and improve their wellbeing by working with forums, clubs, and community partners to expand accessible and culturally appropriate opportunities in sport, physical activity, conservation activities and green space engagement for disabled residents and diverse communities. Such as sensory sessions, nature engagement, adapted sport opportunities and healthy eating.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation rates from under-represented groups. • Feedback from forum partners, clubs, and participants 	Sports and Wellbeing/ Ranger teams	03/2027
2.5	<p>Support residents to get around better we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide funding to support local taxi drivers to purchase wheelchair-accessible vehicles. • Increase cycling uptake among women and under-represented communities by identifying and addressing barriers to participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Accessible Taxis • Participation rates • Feedback from residents 	Climate Change and Sustainability/ Licensing	03/2027
2.6	<p>Monitor and improve housing delivery by analysing applicant needs and emerging trends, strengthening support for victims of domestic abuse and armed forces personnel, and expanding partnership working to ensure housing services are inclusive, responsive, and meet the diverse needs of our communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the number and outcomes of applicants • Feedback from residents 	Housing and Social Inclusion	03/2027

EP3: Providing leadership, a strong organisational commitment, and collaborative partnerships to actively promote equality.

Ref No.	Action	Monitoring Criteria	Service Lead	When
3.1	<p>Support Members to lead on the EDI agenda by building their knowledge and awareness through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A refreshed Member EDI training programme as part of their continuing professional development. Supporting the Leader and Cabinet to engage with the borough diverse communities to strengthen relationships and further understanding of issues facing these communities. 	<p>Number of training or briefing sessions delivered. Councillor attendance and engagement levels Feedback indicating increased confidence and knowledge</p>	<p>Customer Service/ Connected Communities/ Democratic Services</p>	03/2027
3.2	<p>Ensure the council meets the requirements of key commitments such as the Armed Forces Covenant Duty and the Race at Work Charter and embed actions arising from these commitments into organisational practice.</p>	<p>Achieving armed forces covenant duty and Race at Work Charter Action Plan</p>	<p>Customer Service</p>	03/2027
3.3	<p>Collaborate with partners to prevent hate crime, respond to domestic abuse and violence against women and girls. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with the Hate Crime Working Group to identify opportunities to better understand local hate crime issues and to raise awareness of reporting routes available to victims. Supporting the coordination of the North Hampshire Domestic Abuse Forum, strengthening partnership working and enabling a more effective response to local challenges related to domestic abuse. Collaborating with partners to monitor and address violence against women and girls, contributing to our commitments under the White Ribbon accreditation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting levels of hate crime, DA and VAWG Partnership actions taken forward. Increased engagement with community safety pathways 	<p>Connected Communities/ Safer communities/ Domestic abuse coordinator</p>	03/2027
3.4	<p>We will continue to strengthen organisational accountability and transparency in equality, diversity, and inclusion by improving how EDI is embedded within the leading council improvement planning process and by routinely reviewing our practices within the EDI Working Group.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of EDI highlight report produced. Increased quality and consistency of EDI entries across service plans 	<p>Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Working Group</p>	03/2027
3.5	<p>Build respect and understanding across all communities in our borough through positive messaging, events and campaigns that celebrate our differences and help bring communities together.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of initiatives and events supported Reach and Engagement Feedback from initiatives 	<p>Corporate Comms/ Economy, Culture and Place Marketing</p>	03/2027

EP4: Strengthen the diversity of our workforce and move to a culture that values difference, where everyone feels they belong and have opportunities to succeed and thrive.

Ref No.	Action	Monitoring Criteria	Service Lead	When
4.1	Strengthen our recruitment processes to focus on attracting the best talent and minimise potential sources of bias. This includes reviewing options to enhance the process such as the introduction of anonymous shortlisting.	Ongoing monitoring of both applicant and workforce demographic profiles.	HR and OD	03/2027
4.2	Gain a better understanding of our workforce, we will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase staff confidence in sharing equality data by improving why it matters how it drives positive change. • Improve the quality of workforce and recruitment equality data and regularly report data to inform decision making. • Publish the annual Gender Pay Gap report and explore introducing disability and ethnicity pay audits. • Identify priority areas of focus, either to improve reporting or underrepresentation, and establish necessary task and finish groups to address areas of concern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor disclosure rates • Annual report on workforce and gender pay gap data 	HR and OD	03/2027
4.3	We will design and deliver a tiered a tiered EDI learning programme that builds organisational capability by giving all staff essential EDI training and providing managers with targeted development to strengthen inclusive leadership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uptake of EDI training by leaders • Staff feedback 	Customer Service/ HR and OD	03/2027
4.4	Encourage and support staff networks that brings people together around protected characteristics or shared experiences by enabling staff to participate, recognising contributions, and ensuring their views inform policy and decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of staff participating in groups and feedback • Report from staff networks 	Customer Service/HR	03/2027
4.5	We will strengthen our wellbeing and inclusion offer by creating opportunities for colleagues to connect, share experiences and take part in activities that build understanding and foster a positive, supportive working environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events throughout the year • Staff feedback 	EDI and Wellbeing Group	03/2027
4.6	Strengthen digital inclusion and accessibility across our workforce and members by continuously improving systems and removing barriers that prevent staff and members from accessing and using digital tools confidently. We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Digital Champions and staff networks to identify barriers in digital systems and address them early in the design process. • Provide regular opportunities for staff to build digital confidence, including training, and practical guides. • Expand awareness and use of assistive technologies and inclusive features within the Microsoft toolset. 	Feedback from staff members	Digital and IT	03/2027