

Appendix 2 – EDI Action Plan 2023-24.

| As a Community Leader | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| Objective: To lead by example, to ensure every individual resident is connected and supported | | | |
| Commitments | Action Title | Actions | Responsible Service |
| <p>We will work closely with our partners (Voluntary and Community Sector, Anchor Institutions, Parishes and Church and Faith groups) to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities for joined up working and improving our ability to share information to support and engage our wider communities. Increase volunteering opportunities and participation, funding and support. <p>We will undertake a review of consultation and engagement activities to ensure that they maximise resident participation and are representative of Maidstone’s demographic.</p> <p>We will support and promote diversity and inclusion in the borough through our communications and events – with a focus on our seldom-heard communities.</p> <p>We will support our serving and veteran communities through our commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant and responsibilities under the Armed Forces Act 2021 with guidance provided to staff across all services.</p> | Delivery of One View project - Ongoing Project | Continue to deliver the One View homelessness prevention project including exploring additional cohorts and new projects including Damp and Mould | Housing |
| | Implement no wrong door (local campaign to signpost to services) – increasing access to services - Ongoing Project | Ongoing project and It is important that this action remains and continues to be developed with partners in response to ongoing need. | Housing, Revenues and Benefits, Policy, Communities and Engagement. |
| | Develop a greater understanding of our communities through the Implementation of the Community Insight system - NEW | Provide members with access to profiles of their local communities to inform their work. Provide information and training to relevant services to help inform strategy, policy and service development, embedding a culture of community. Distribute access to local insight to our VCS partners to enable them to access community data to inform funding bids and service development | Data Analytics/Democratic Services |
| | Provide access to digital training and support at Trinity House. Ongoing Project | Training suite up and running. Training and Support offered. Pilot with Digital Kent Volunteer Programme to support residents at Trinity House undertaken. | Housing/ICT/Policy, Communities and Engagement |
| | Increase engagement from our Seldom Heard Communities - Ongoing Project NEW FOCUS | Work with the consultation institute and successful partner to identify and implement actions to increase engagement with those groups that are seldom heard. | Policy, Communities and Engagement |
| | Delivery of Community Grants and support to Community Groups - NEW | Continue to ensure the delivery of grants to those organisations best placed in our communities to ensure the delivery of services at a local level. | Policy, Communities and Engagement |
| | Develop the Equality Diversity and Inclusion officer group to provide internal direction and challenge- Ongoing Project NEW FOCUS | Group has been expanded to include wider group of front-line service areas providing expertise and insight on community and seldom heard groups. Continue to develop the group, its remit and influence to ensure it is embedded. | Policy, Communities and Engagement |
| | Implement the Diversity Calendar to ensure join up between our communities and key internal teams- Ongoing Project | Developing the use of a Diversity Calendar that reflects the curiosity and diversity of staff and the wider community. Dates of meaning to the organisation to be tied into existing events, community events, well-being week. Internal ‘celebration’ – information in Inside MBC newsletter, books and art/culture recommendations. Develop a Team talk for Unit Managers to identify dates of meaning to the organisation to celebrate and promote diversity and inclusion. | Policy, Communities and Engagement HR/L&D, Comms and Events, Museums, Civic team, Economic Development, Communities lead |

Appendix 2 – EDI Action Plan 2023-24.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| | Provide guidance to enable all staff to support Armed Forces Community Ongoing Project | Continue to ensure the Council supports the armed force community in accordance with the covenant. It has been identified that Forces Connect App not sufficient in terms of information for Veterans in local community, explore more ways in which to reach and connect with local veterans in the community. | Policy, Communities and Engagement |
| | Explore structural inequality impact of climate change in Maidstone | Undertake a review to identify and understand areas of inequality and impacts in the borough related to the effects of climate change and explore measures for intervention | Policy, Communities and Engagement/ Data Analytics/ Climate Change and Biodiversity |
| Connections to other plans and Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Plan • Communications Plan • Financial Inclusion Strategy • Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy | | | |
| As an Employer | | | |
| Objective: To lead a diverse and inclusive workforce that is reflective of the borough of Maidstone where residents and colleagues feel safe, confident, and empowered to challenge and bring about change. | | | |
| Commitments | Action Title | Actions | Responsible Service |
| We will train our staff so that they are skilled in inclusive practice, to work with communities who are less able, or willing, to participate in life in their local neighbourhoods. | Provide Staff training in Cultural Competencies NEW | Pursue cultural competency training with the Homelessness Prevention Forum | Housing/Human Resources |
| We will provide training and support to staff so they can recognise and manage unacceptable behaviours. | Support delivery of actions to support Inclusion and Belonging for staff in the Workforce Strategy NEW | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training to create awareness on EDI • Support employees to develop staff network groups i.e. carers, disabilities, LGBTQI+ • Support the outcomes of the staff survey on equalities. • Develop team talks on EDI to discuss at team meetings. • Develop creative, inclusive communication mechanisms so all council staff, including those who don't access information online, are informed of council news and developments. • Embed our values and behaviours with all staff. • Encourage staff to declare their protected characteristics confidentially through employee self-service. • Continue to analyse application and shortlisting data to identify ways to make our recruitment more inclusive and to ensure non-discrimination. • Support services to develop appropriate career grade structures for succession planning • Continue to promote the benefits package to all staff • Review our rewards and employee benefits offer to ensure its competitive with other public sector employers | Human Resources/ Policy, Communities and Engagement |
| We will look after the mental health of our staff and recognise when this offer needs to change | Ensure all new Members have equitable access to support | Implement a new member survey to identify needs. | Democratic Services/ Policy, Communities and Engagement |

Appendix 2 – EDI Action Plan 2023-24.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| | and resources for their role. NEW | | |
| | Maintain understanding of the organisation's diversity and staff need. NEW | Bi-Annual staff EDI survey to respond to need and benchmark progress. Staff Carers Survey to be undertaken to understand the needs of staff with caring responsibilities and how best the organisation can provide support. | Policy, Communities and Engagement/ Human Resources |
| | Provide training and support for Mental Health Champions – ongoing Action | Roll out of Corporate Leadership Team 'lived experiences of working for MBC' listening exercises Support Delivery of Workforce Strategy Well-Being and Reward Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop initiatives to increase awareness of resilience and wellbeing. Continue promoting national health and wellbeing initiatives. Continue roll out of Resilience Training to managers and staff. Increase awareness of Mental Health First Aiders. | Human Resources |

Connection to other plans

Strategic Plan
Workforce Strategy

As a Service Provider

Objective: **To deliver inclusive services in accordance with the Council's values**

| Commitments | Action Title | Actions | Responsible Service |
|--|---|---|---|
| We will use specific and meaningful language when referring to diverse communities. | Adopt Inclusive Language Guide – Ongoing Action | Continue to watch for release of LGA Inclusive Language Guide Explore appropriate alternative options | Policy, Communities and Engagement |
| We will support access to services and support through ICT process, communication and join up with partners. | Proactively use 'neutral spaces' to increase access to support and services for residents – Ongoing Action | Continue to explore new and existing spaces for Face-to-face support provision and services that it may be appropriate to provide from these spaces | Policy, Communities and Engagement |
| We will take an evidence-based approach to leading recovery supporting financial inclusion and social well-being in Maidstone. including a specific work stream on communities. | Understand where relevant who is accessing our services and ensure that this informs service deliver NEW | Undertake a review of all services to identify EDI data collected and identify purpose and where relevant make improvements to data collection. Undertake analysis of demographic data to inform service development and ongoing monitoring. Create space on the website for publication of demographic data. | Data Analytics/Information Governance/ Policy, Communities and Engagement |
| We will review the Equalities Impact Assessment processes. | Support delivery of Maidstone becoming a Compassionate borough. NEW | The Compassionate Maidstone Project has restarted with Heart of Kent Hospice. Review bereavement policy Explore bereavement, death and dying and its impact on service delivery and how this is addressed in policies and procedures. Work internally with relevant teams and the EDI Officer group and externally with community partners to explore how death and dying can become a part of conversation. | Policy, Communities and Engagement/Communication and Events |
| We will review and identify our policies where we consider equalities impacts and identify how we can improve outcomes through revisions to policy. | Support delivery of the Financial Inclusion and | The current Financial Inclusion Strategy is under review. The review is data led and being informed by the LIFT Dashboard, Community Insight Tool alongside wider | Policy, Communities and Engagement/Data Analytics |

Appendix 2 – EDI Action Plan 2023-24.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| | Social Well-Being Strategy and Action Plan. NEW | <p>measurements of Poverty and disadvantage are informing the strategy aims and workstreams.</p> <p>This Strategy will seek to respond to the wider determinants of financial exclusion affecting residents in Maidstone.</p> | |
| | Ensure EDI is embedded in policies and service development - Ongoing Action | <p>Prioritise existing Policies by review date and implement process of review for equalities.</p> <p>Work with Service Managers on understanding of the Public Sector Equality duty.</p> | Policy, Communities and Engagement/HR |
| <p>Connections to other plans Strategic Plan Digital Strategy Financial Inclusion Strategy</p> | | | |