DRAFT

Valuing Difference

Positive Inclusivity Through Meaningful Change

NCC People Strategic Equality Action Plan

2021 - 2023

Norfolk County Council

Introduction

Norfolk County Council is committed to tackling discrimination and prejudice in all its forms and recognises our responsibility to lead by example. We have five key corporate objectives to embed EDI across our service delivery and people practices.

Objective 1: Role model an organisational culture that respects and values difference across our county and in our workforce.

Objective 2: Promote inclusive design and accessibility for disabled people in Norfolk and remove barriers to independence.
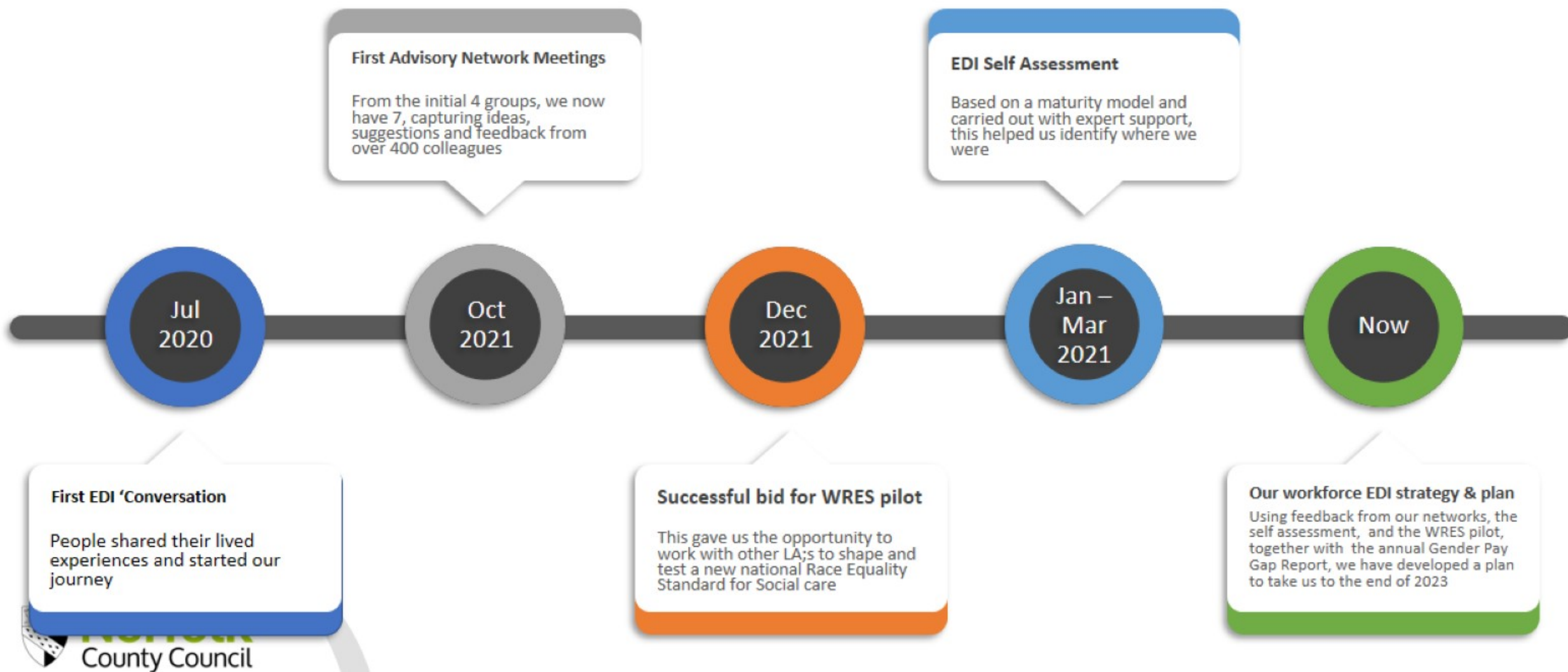
Objective 3: Strengthen hate incident recording and reporting protocols and better integrate these within safeguarding practice, to safeguard people in Norfolk from hate incidents.

Objective 4: Develop the Council's reputation as an employer that values difference, attracting and recruiting colleagues from a diverse range of backgrounds for the value they can bring to our organisation.

Objective 5: Support and encourage our colleagues to be the best they can be at work, providing them with an employment deal that is fair and inclusive, helping everyone to contribute to the ambitions of the Council

This People Strategic EDI Equality Action Plan supports the delivery of our corporate objectives and EDI priorities identified through self assessment and engagement with colleagues

Norfolk
County Council

Our Journey

First Advisory Network Meetings

From the initial 4 groups, we now have 7, capturing ideas, suggestions and feedback from over 400 colleagues

EDI Self Assessment

Based on a maturity model and carried out with expert support, this helped us identify where we were

Jul 2020

Oct 2021

Dec 2021

Jan – Mar 2021

Now

First EDI 'Conversation

People shared their lived experiences and started our journey

Successful bid for WRES pilot

This gave us the opportunity to work with other LA;s to shape and test a new national Race Equality Standard for Social care

Our workforce EDI strategy & plan

Using feedback from our networks, the self assessment, and the WRES pilot, together with the annual Gender Pay Gap Report, we have developed a plan to take us to the end of 2023

County Council

Self Assessment Maturity Model

You are here

Transition Point

4 Embedding

- Inclusion is a core component of all business activities and processes.
- Creating a high performance culture throughout equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Culture is seen as by people as the differentiator among competitors.
- Leading inclusively is a key competency for all of our people, workforce and service users — the ability to recognise, value and leverage difference is embed within the organisation.
- ED&I is part of the culture or DNA — a natural mindset for all our people.
- Consistently strong and recognised as leaders amongst the organisation, stakeholders and across the service delivery.

3 Integration

- Clear ownership and accountability for E,D&I and anti-discrimination that is led by the leadership
- Levelling the playing field for employees and addressing the systematic and cultural barriers
- ED&I is being integrated within the business and part of plans, work streams as a thread grows across all aspects of work.
- Awareness moving to behaviour change,
- The organisation is recognised externally for successes, and invites external scrutiny for improvement purposes.
- The organisation has an inclusive culture developing and demonstrates accountability for progress established.

2 Awareness

- Overarching ED&I strategy in place
- Rcognition of barriers to entry for certain groups or certain individuals. For example, increasing representation of specific demographic groups i.e. women, different ethnicities and race, people with disabilities or LGBTQ+..
- What you say, how you behave and what you do, are aligned around ED&I.
- More sophisticated data and analytics are used to monitor progress

1 Compliance

- Policies are in place which focus on legislative compliance and equal opportunities.
- 'Activities' are aligned with ED&I principles..
- Governance and accountability, amongst leaders reinforces the business case and HR processes with key policies.
- Baseline data and trend metrics, help to inform decision-making to help the organisation, move forward.
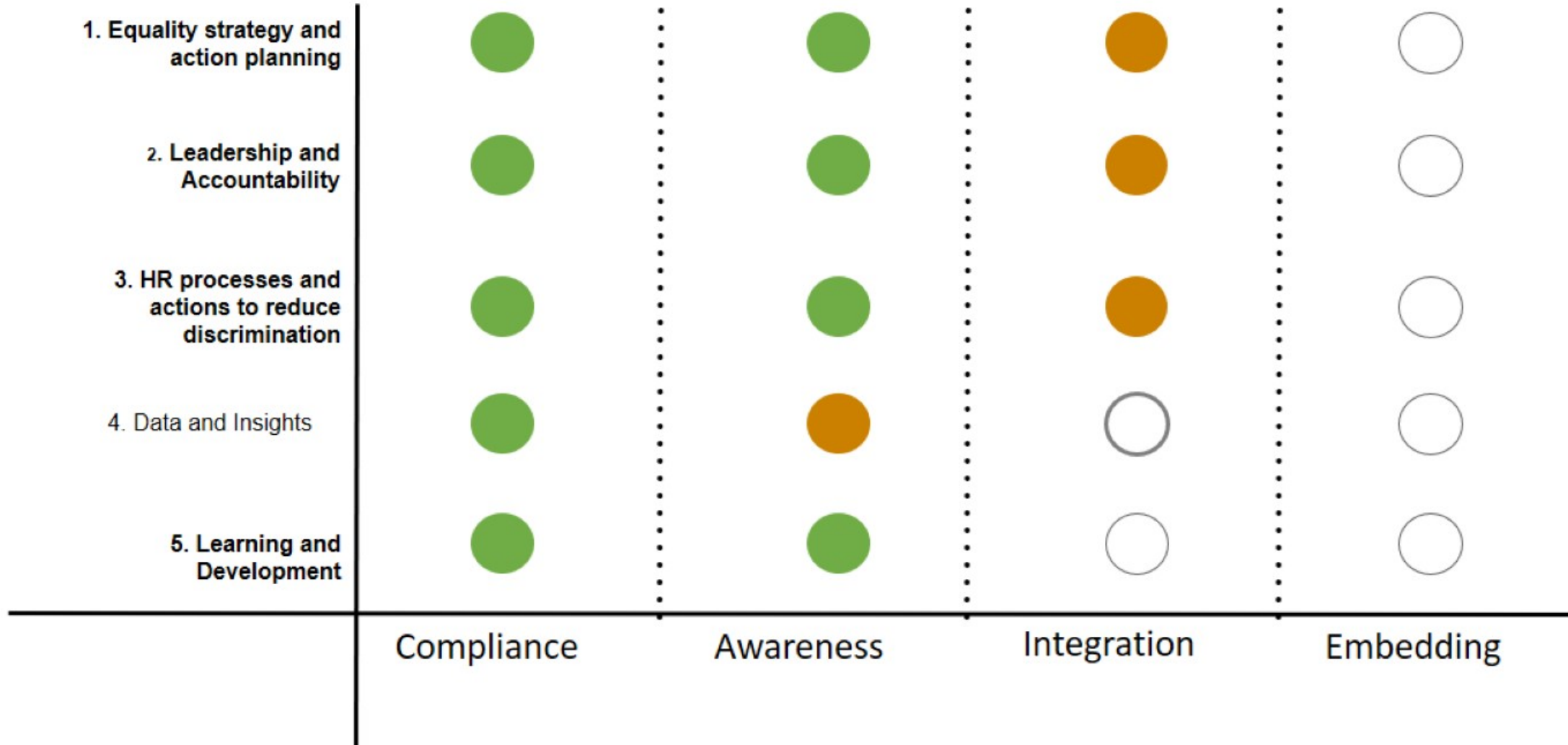
The self assessment made a number of recommendations that would help us move towards Embedding

WRES Findings The WRES measures White and BAME* colleagues across 9 indicators. A summary of the results are shown below

Indicator	Outcome
1) Percentage of employees from a minority ethnic background in each of the council pay bands compared with the percentage of staff in the rest of the workforce	We are generally representative across the first 8 pay bands when compared to Norfolk overall (96.5% White 3.5% BAME (2011 Census), we are not representative at the higher pay bands (£70,000+)
2) Comparative rate of employees from a minority ethnic background being appointed from shortlisting	44% of white staff and 48% of BAME staff were appointed from shortlist. This suggests that white staff are very slightly less likely to be appointed from shortlist than BAME staff, however generally there is parity
3) Number of staff who entered the formal disciplinary process in the last 12 months	0.3% of white staff and 0.0% of BAME staff entered the formal disciplinary process. This suggests that BAME staff are slightly less likely to enter the formal disciplinary process, however care should be taken give the very low numbers involved.
4) Number of regulated professional staff who entered the fitness to practice process in the last 12 months	We did not report on this figure as it is not only NCC who can refer regulated professional staff to the fitness to practice process (the latest report showed that employer referral made up only 22% of the total referrals made.) DHSC are working with SWE to enable authorities to access this data directly from them in the future
5) Number of staff accessing funded non-mandatory Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in the last 12 months	We did not report on this indicator as there is no clear definition as to what should be included. Discussion with other authorities in the pilot also identified this as an issue and as part of the engagement with employee groups, it was agreed that we would carry out further engagement with those groups to identify what CPD was important to them and should be included in this indicator. We have therefore included that piece of work in our action plan.
6) Number of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from service users, relatives or the public in last 12 months	7% of white staff and 12% of BAME staff experienced harassment, bullying or abuse from service users, relatives or the public in last 12 months. This suggests that BAME staff are nearly twice as likely to experience harassment, bullying or abuse from service users, relatives or the public
7) Number of employees experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from colleagues or managers in the last 12 months	4% of white staff and a maximum of 10% of BAME staff experienced harassment, bullying or abuse from their colleagues or manager in last 12 months. This suggests that BAME staff could be just over twice as likely to experience harassment, bullying or abuse from their colleagues or manager* (* This data was taken from the annual employee survey. This only reports a figure if more than 10 people respond to the question to protect individual names. For CS. We know that some people did respond, but less than 10. we have therefore based this data on a maximum of 9. These figures should therefore be viewed with extreme caution and we will look to improve the accuracy in 2022)
8) Turnover in the last 12 months	11.0% of white staff and 12.7% of BAME staff left in the last 12 months. This suggests that white staff are slightly less likely to leave.
9: Percentage difference between organisations' senior management membership and its overall workforce	95% of the whole workforce were of white ethnicity, compared to 96% of senior management. This is representative of the 2011 Census which showed that Norfolk was 96.5% White, however this figure is likely to change when the 2021 Census data is published next year.

Strategic Principles

Our first step was to develop strategic principles that reflect our Values

Take Accountability	• We will have a robust Governance structure to hold ourselves to account
Make Strategy Happen	• We will have an annual Equality Action Plan with clear outcomes and timescales
Be Evidence Based	• We will use a range of qualitative and quantitative data to inform our plans and monitor our progress against those plans
Be Business Like	• We will use our networks and internal expertise to develop effective and value for money solutions
Be Collaborative	• Our solutions will be developed in partnership with colleagues who have lived experiences and we will work collaboratively with external partners to promote inclusion across Norfolk

Norfolk
County Council

Strategic Aims

We then developed three key strategic aims, which between them, link back to the Corporate EDI objectives

Positive Inclusivity Through Meaningful Change

A safe and respectful workplace where every colleague feels comfortable in being their authentic self (Corporate Objectives 1, 3, 4)

A reputation where NCC is seen as an inclusive, respected and reputable employer (Corporate Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

An inclusive and accessible working environment, ensuring that all colleagues can deliver the best at work

(Corporate Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4)

Clear measurable outcomes and actions were then developed using the feedback from our network, the WRES and self assessment recommendations to make our strategy happen.

Norfolk
County Council

A safe and respectful workplace where every colleague feels comfortable in being their authentic self

We will	By taking this action(s)	We will measure success by	We will report on our progress by
Support management to be effective at providing the necessary support for their teams	Providing training and education for managers using a variety of methods	Training take up and attendance/feedback Staff survey results	
Show a clear commitment from senior leadership to act as role models	Setting clear equality objectives for Senior leaders – pledge?	Examples of action taken to achieve objective	
Ensure colleagues are clear about what is deemed as unacceptable behaviour	Update our code of conduct and provide training on expected behaviour	Updated policy and guidance issued, communications, reduction in grievances relating to unacceptable behaviour	
Have clear support for employees who experience abuse	Update our policies, guidance and support on managing violence and abusive behaviour	Published policy and guidance, together with communication Feedback from colleagues on awareness and experience of support	
Ensure managers understand the importance of having diverse teams with a range of experiences	Incorporate the benefits of diverse teams into manager and recruitment training or stand-alone workshops Encourage conversations for managers to make full use of colleagues' talents and skills to make people feel valued	Training take up and attendance/feedback Increased diversity of applicants and people offered posts	
Celebrate diversity in all its forms	Annual communications plans, celebrating a range of events, together with a cultural calendar	Increased engagement in Advisory and Employee networks Attendance at events	

Inclusive and accessible working environment, ensuring that all colleagues can deliver the best at work

We will	By taking this action(s)	We will measure success by	We will report on our progress by
Ensure all colleagues can access what is required to work effectively	Actively support disabled colleagues Communicate the available support clearly and promote it effectively Promote the use of inclusive design and digital and physical accessibility Listen to Advisory and Employee Networks to understand needs'	Reduction in IMT and manager requests relating to accessibility Staff survey results – assessing whether the balance of the deal has improved for colleagues with different protected characteristics, particularly disabled colleagues Monitoring grievances and ill health-related dismissals	
Support management to feel confident in providing colleagues with the appropriate levels of accessibility	Use training or stand-alone workshops to support managers to feel confident in removing barriers Provide managers with guidance on having conversations around accessibility	Exit interview responses Feedback from the Advisory and Employee networks Reduction in grievances relating to accessible working Monitoring grievances and ill health-related dismissals	
Ensure that our recruitment practices see each person for who they are, irrespective of their gender, ethnic background, age or any other factor that can lead to unconscious (or conscious) bias	Promote NCC as a Disability Confident Leader Use positive action to support the recruitment for under-represented groups Take a strengths-based recruitment approach focusing on talents and skills	Increased diversity of applicants and people offered posts Continuing our Disability Confident Leader status	
Ensure colleagues and managers understand the difference between 'equality', 'equity' and 'inclusion'	Adopt the social model of disability Education and training Updating the EqIA guidance	Improved EqIAs that focus on removing barriers, as opposed to 'making adjustments' Reduction in IMT and manager requests relating to accessibility	

A reputation where NCC is seen as an inclusive, respected and reputable employer

We will	By taking this action(s)	We will measure success by	We will report on our progress by
Ensure all of NCC's processes are consistent, fair and inclusive	Review all policy and guidance and seek advice and feedback from the Advisory and Employee networks and colleagues from diverse backgrounds	Updated policy and guidance published Feedback from Advisory and Employee networks and staff survey results	
Have a workforce that at all levels represents the diversity of Norfolk	Incorporate the recommendations from the EDI recruitment review Support colleagues involved in recruiting to feel well-trained and supported relating to EDI by updating management and recruitment training Review the induction and onboarding support for colleagues who join from overseas Implement recommendations arising out of pay gap analysis	Increased diversity of applicants and people offered posts, particularly at senior level Monitoring the retention of colleagues with less than 2 years of employment Feedback from the EDI Recruitment & Career Development Group	
Ensure members of the public are aware of NCC's inclusive values	Promote the values of Together, For Norfolk Work with recruitment to incorporate the recommendations from the EDI recruitment review to ensure appropriate messaging is conveyed	Increased diversity of applicants	

Engagement and Communication

The purpose of the communications plan is to

- Ensure that current and prospective NCC colleagues are fully aware of the Corporate EDI objectives and our EDI People Strategy & Plan
- Inform, educate, and support all employees to adopt inclusive attitudes in every aspect of their working lives
- Enable Managers to understand the busines benefits of inclusion and have the tools and education to increase inclusion
- Recognise and celebrate key events related to EDI

We use a range of channels to engage and communicate

- A dedicated area on MyNet that brings together the corporate service delivery EDI plan and the People strategy & plan
- Our employee networks
- Participation in regional groups with partners such a the NHS Inclusion group
- Internal communications including Friday Takeaway, manager's brief and tom's blog

Norfolk County Council