

OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Policy and Intelligence Team and HROD



0. Summary

This paper sets out the commitment that Plymouth City Council has to promoting equality. It explores the legal duties that the Council must comply with and provides examples of how these have been fulfilled during the past year. Specifically, the paper outlines the progress that the Council has made in delivering against its equality objectives and, its Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2022/23. Towards the end of the paper, a refreshed Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2023/24 is introduced. The paper acknowledges that while progress has been made, further work is required for equality and diversity to be fully mainstreamed across the Council.

1. Context

1.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 extended statutory protection across nine ‘protected characteristics’. It recognised new forms of discrimination and introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

As an Authority listed in Schedule 19 of the Act, we are subject to the PSED. The PSED consists of a general equality duty supported by specific duties which are imposed by secondary legislation.

1.2 Specific Equality Duties

The aims of the PSED are supported by specific duties set out in separate regulations made by the Secretary of State. Listed authorities in England are required to:

- At least annually from 30 March 2018
 - publish information about their employees and other persons affected by their policies and practices to demonstrate compliance with the general duty;
 - publish gender pay gap information relating to the employees; the form and content of this publication is set out in a schedule to the regulations.
- At least every four years, prepare and publish one or more objectives that they think are needed to further any of the aims of the General Equality Duty.

1.3 Due regard to Equality and Equality Impact Assessments

Those subject to the PSED must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- promote good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

The Equality Act says that we must exercise due regard to equality when we make decisions, in a way that is reasonable and proportionate to the decision being taken. To discharge this duty, we remain firmly committed to conducting Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) on all member decisions taken in the context of our Leader's scheme of delegation. We do this to ensure they do not adversely impact our different communities.

1.4 Our equality information

Alongside this document, we have published our [Equality Profiles](#), which include data and intelligence about our residents and service users, covering all of the nine protected characteristics from the Equality Act. These are:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| ▪ Age | ▪ Pregnancy and Maternity |
| ▪ Disability | ▪ Gender Reassignment |
| ▪ Religion or Belief | ▪ Race |
| ▪ Marriage and Civil Partnerships | ▪ Sex |

- Sexual Orientation

As an organisation committed to inclusion, we recognise that other groups such as veterans, carers, and care leavers can also face additional barriers.

Our Summary Equality Profile is updated annually to keep it as current as possible. The [Plymouth Report](#) is another useful source of further data about our diverse communities.

1.5 Policy

The diversity of our city and workforce is one of our greatest strengths and assets. We put equality and diversity at the centre of all our work. Our approach and commitment to equality is also set out in our [Equality and Diversity Policy](#). This is integral to our commitment to making Plymouth ‘one of Europe’s most vibrant waterfront cities where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone’.

In the spirit of that commitment, we have worked to ensure we deliver services to all our communities in a way that eliminates discrimination, advances equality of opportunity, and fosters good relations.

1.6 Plymouth City Council’s Corporate Plan

Plymouth City Council and its partners are committed to the shared vision to become ‘one of Europe’s most vibrant waterfront cities where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone’. To achieve this vision, we have adopted a set of values that underpin our commitment to equality and diversity in the Council’s [Corporate Plan](#).

We aim to be;-

- Democratic
- Responsible
- Fair
- Collaborative

1.7 Customer feedback

Plymouth City Council is committed to the highest standards of customer service. We are committed to treating all of our customers with fairness and respect and encourage feedback about our services. Our primary mechanism for collecting customer feedback is through our online system Firmstep. Whilst we monitor customer complaints, we do not do this against the protected characteristics. However, we have refreshed our demographic monitoring guidance as the first step towards this.

1.8 The Equality Framework for Local Government

The [Equality Framework for Local Government](#) (EFLG) is an equality and diversity tool for local government developed by the LGA. The EFLG is also a way for the Council to deliver against the PSED. It consists of four elements assessed against three levels of achievement; ‘developing’, ‘achieving’ and ‘excellence’.

The assessed elements are:

- Leadership and organisational commitment
- Understanding and working with communities
- Diverse and engaged workforce
- Responsive services and customer care

As a Council, we have committed to working towards the ‘excellence level’ of the EFLG. Our Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2023-2024 sets out how we as a Council plan to continue working towards this (see Appendix A).

2. Our equality objectives

We are committed to treating everyone with respect and dignity, and working towards creating a fairer city. Under our PSED, we must publish one or more equality objectives every four years. We last set our equality objectives in 2020.

Our equality objectives correspond to the three main strands of the general equality duty. This provides a strong link and solid evidence to demonstrate that we are discharging our duty and making progress towards the aims of the Equality Act 2010.

Furthermore, we have chosen our equality objectives to reflect the concerns of a broad spectrum of protected characteristics to avoid establishing a hierarchy of discrimination, whilst also reflecting the particular challenges faced by our local diverse communities.

We have set one overarching objective to celebrate diversity and ensure that Plymouth is a welcoming city.

Plymouth City Council is committed to celebrating the diversity of our city. We have an [Equality and Diversity Calendar](#) which we used to help us celebrate our city's diversity and different communities throughout the year.

Case study – Black History Month

Black History Month aims to help raise awareness of the history and contribution of black individuals and communities in the UK. In 2022, Plymouth City Council provided a small amount of funding to local organisations to celebrate Black History Month which was used to support local events in the city. The Lord Mayor showed her support for Black History Month when she enjoyed a community cultural cooking demonstration which was organised by Diversity Business Incubator.

We have set four specific objectives which we will work towards achieving. These are:

1. Pay equality for women, and employees with disabilities in our workforce.

Plymouth City Council is committed to equal opportunities and the fair treatment of its workforce. As an employer, we have a clear policy of paying employees equally for the same or equivalent work regardless of sex or disability. The Council operates a comprehensive job evaluation scheme to ensure that rates of pay are fair and are based wholly on the role being undertaken.

We want to ensure that all employees have the opportunity to progress and meet their potential. As an employer with over 250 employees, we have an obligation to report on our gender pay gap. We monitor pay equality across different employee groups. We recognise that our employees with disabilities face additional barriers compared to those employees who do not, which is why we decided to set this as one of our objectives. Progress against this Equality Objective is set out in a separate published report.

2. Supporting our workforce through the implementation of our People Strategy 2020 – 2024

Our People Strategy 2020 – 2024 is our workforce strategy and will help us to work inclusively, with current and future employees and partner organisations. To make this happen the strategy has been split into four key themes:

- Everyone feels welcome - inclusivity and diversity
- Aspire to be the best - talent and development
- Attract and keep the right people - employer of choice
- Be well led - our leadership

As an organisation, we must ensure that all our employees feel welcomed, are treated with dignity and respect and, are encouraged to meet their potential. We monitor the implementation of our

People Strategy to ensure we are meeting our ambitions. Details of our progress can be found on our [People Strategy timeline](#).

Under our specific equality duties we publish annual equality monitoring data which covers the demographic breakdown of our workforce, as well as our recruitment processes and employees leaving the organisation. This information is found in our [Workforce Equality Profile](#). As part of the council's ongoing commitment to knowing its workforce, we will shortly be asking all employees to ensure that the information held about them is correct and updated. This includes sensitive information relating to the protected characteristics.

Progress against this Equality Objective includes:

- Becoming a White Ribbon Accredited organisation as part of our ongoing commitment to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). This builds upon the work of the VAWG Commission which was created at the beginning of this year to review what is being done across the city to educate, prevent and deter VAWG. It also considered what support is available for victims and made recommendations on what more could be done to make women and girls safer in the city. Work is ongoing to progress the Commission's [recommendations](#).
- Creating an 'equality hub' on our intranet for employees which includes a range of engaging and useful information such as our Equality Objectives, information about our PSED and our equality and diversity policy.
- Delivering appreciative enquiry training to employees and partners to encourage good practice and inclusive community engagement.
- Continuing to roll out our equality and diversity training and developed a training course for all customer facing employees.
- Working with our partners at City College to support a number of placements across the Council through the Supported Internship Programme. The programme works specifically with students who have an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) and provides them with two 12 week placements across a year.
- Continuing to convene our Corporate Equality Group which is attended by senior managers from across the Council. The Group provides a forum for managers to discuss equality and diversity issues relevant to their service area.
- Reviewing and updating our recruitment and selection policy to ensure that our recruitment processes are fair and promote equality and which also encourage flexible working.
- Launching and supporting our employee networks which aim to help foster a positive culture, offer networking opportunities to employees, and encourage an understanding and celebration of difference within the organisation. These networks are continuing to develop and include:
 - Disability Network
 - Carer's Network
 - Faith and Belief Network
 - LGBTQ+ Network
 - Men's Network
 - Race, Ethnicity and Cultural Heritage (Reach) Network
 - Women's Network

3. Supporting victims of hate crime so they feel confident to report incidents, and working with, and through our partner organisations to achieve positive outcomes.

We have been working with our partners to ensure that victims of hate incidents and hate crimes receive appropriate support and that people feel confident and understand how to report incidents. We have also been working hard to raise awareness of the importance of reporting hate incidents and hate crimes via third party reporting centres.

We will continue to work with communities and partner agencies across the criminal justice system and voluntary and community colleagues to achieve a positive outcome for victims.

A full breakdown of hate crimes/incidents within Plymouth in the past year along with perceptions of safety amongst different groups can be found within our [Equality Profiles](#).

Progress against this Equality Objective includes raising awareness and engagement activity such as:

- Marking Hate Crime Awareness Week.
- Sharing messages about hate crime via our internal and external communication channels.
- Engaging with community groups and organisations to encourage reporting of hate incidents/crimes via third part reporting centres.
- Continuing to work with our partners via Safer Plymouth to promote a joined-up approach to combatting hate incidents/crime within Plymouth.
- Incorporating hate crime within Safer Plymouth activities.
- Raising awareness of hate incidents/crime at the Equalities Working Group.

4. Plymouth is a city where people from different backgrounds get along well.

We continue to build strong and cohesive communities to ensure that our city is welcoming for everyone. In our City Survey, we include questions that ask our residents about community cohesion in their local area. To allow us to better understand the cohesion levels in Plymouth we have commissioned Plymouth Octopus Project to carry out appreciative enquiries with different communities. We also continue to work closely alongside our partner agencies and communities to understand the challenges that they face.

Case study – Community Builders

The Council's Community Empowerment Programme, aims to promote partnership working, community involvement and community resilience. As part of this programme, 10 community development workers are currently in post across the city and are working side by side with residents and local community groups. Community Builders start by finding out what people within a community care about so they can work together to change, develop and/or sustain community activities. They map what is going on in communities to enable people to find out what is going on in their community to help them connect and improve their wellbeing. Community Builders are working across Plymouth including in some of the least cohesive wards of the city. They will be working in the following areas:

- | | |
|----------------|------------|
| ▪ Barne Barton | ▪ East End |
| ▪ Devonport | ▪ Efford |
| ▪ Honicknowle | ▪ Estover |
| ▪ Stonehouse | ▪ Southway |

Community Builders are also working specifically with minority ethnic communities, LGBTQ+ communities, people with disabilities, young people and men.

We know when communities are well connected, they are more likely to have better health outcomes and have increased levels of cohesion. To measure cohesion in Plymouth, within our survey work, we ask whether residents feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. This question was included in the survey as a measure of community cohesion and more specifically to measure performance against our equality objective.

Progress against this Equality Objective:

The question regarding residents who think that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together was asked in the 2022 City Survey, which uses the same methodology as earlier Plymouth City Surveys. The results show that 42 per cent of respondents

agreed that Plymouth is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together, while 14 per cent disagreed. The proportion of residents agreeing with this statement has increased compared with 39 per cent who agreed in 2020 and 38 per cent in 2018. Plymouth's cohesion score is currently 77 per cent; this excludes the neutral options and is a significant increase from 74 per cent in 2020.

The result does however show a decrease from responses to the same question posed within the Residents Survey held in 2021 which was 55 per cent. This 2021 result is an outlier in terms of the trend over recent years and represented a significant increase over the score recorded in 2020 and 2018. It is thought that the explanation for this may be that the Residents Survey was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic and the questions were presented in a different context than they are in the City Survey.

The fieldwork was conducted in August 2021 just after the COVID social restrictions were lifted. The question was sandwiched between a question that asked whether local people had a role in looking after their own area and a series of questions that focused on the pandemic response. This may have led people to focus more on people getting on well together and less on the difference in background. There is a significant body of research to suggest 'community spirit' was significantly uplifted by the pandemic.

There is some evidence of a specific uplift associated with cohesion related activity on the ground. The Unify Plymouth programme which was active over this time period sought to promote cohesion in four targeted wards in the city, the average uplift in the cohesion rate over the 2018 figure used as a baseline for the Unify Plymouth Programme across these four wards was 30.22 per cent compared with a Citywide figure of 20.11 per cent and whilst this was not enough on its own to explain the citywide increase it may have been a contributory factor.

3. Demonstrating our commitment

In addition to publishing our progress towards meeting our equality objectives, the Public Sector Equality Duty requires that we publish information to show that we are compliant with the Equality Act General Duty. This section describes some of the work we did to promote equality, tackle discrimination and to encourage good relations between different groups last year.

We have continued to work hard to promote equality within communities and to ensure that our services are accessible. As a Council, we value the contribution that people and communities can make and want to harness that potential to work together for a fairer, greener, and healthier city where everyone can enjoy an outstanding quality of life. Our [community engagement principles](#) set out our approach to community engagement.

We are proud that some of the steps that we have taken to promote equality include:

- Working with our partners to start breaking down some of the barriers facing refugees who wish to volunteer. The work has resulted in small groups of volunteers from ODILS Learning Foundation and Devon and Cornwall Refugee Support supporting the Big Blue Splash and SailGP events.
- Working with a group of local organisations working with disabled people in the city to help make our events more accessible. This work has included setting up an Events, Access and Inclusion Group which helps us to capture continuous feedback. As a result of this feedback, we have been improving the accessible facilities we provide at our events. We have also been making our communications and pre-event information more accessible.
- Working with our health and community partners to deliver a project called 'Mind the Gap' which aims to raise awareness of the services available to carers from underrepresented backgrounds. Effective partnership working has been key to the success of this project.

- Carrying out a review of accessibility for all Plymouth Active Leisure buildings and services to help ensure our leisure services are accessible.
- Continuing to embed equality and diversity within our procurement activities.
- Continuing to provide sanctuary for those seeking refuge from conflict by setting up a Ukraine Taskforce to coordinate the citywide response to the Ukraine crisis following the launch of the Homes for Ukraine scheme.
- Working with our partners within the Changing Futures Programme to understand the needs of people with lived experiences within the complex needs system.
- Promoting inclusive growth via the Plymouth Charter development programme. This work has been funded through the C-Care project, an EU Interreg funded project which aims to better understand how the Plymouth economy can promote inclusion and support flexible working to create an economy that works for everybody.
- Setting up the Cost of Living Taskforce to coordinate a city-wide effort to provide support for Plymouth families impacted by the rising cost of living.
- Continuing to promote inclusion at the Box via an Access Improvement Group alongside an extensive programme of engagement work with communities. This has included for example, 'Where Am I?', a co-curated exhibition as part of the Culture Club programme that explored the Box's collections through an LGBTQ+ lens.
- Analysing the findings from the 2021 Census to allow us to understand the demographics and changing needs of our communities. This insight helps to inform our Equality profiles and EIAs.
- Continuing to promote and support digital inclusion by purchasing a small number of chrome books and tablets which supported digital champion volunteers to give one-to-one digital skills training and assistance.

3.2 Our Members

Our members have an important role in ensuring that equality and diversity is at the centre of the organisation as set out in the Council Constitution which states:

"We the people of Plymouth, through our elected representatives to Plymouth City Council, ordain and establish this Constitution today 30 January 2012 in order that it will assist in the elimination of discrimination and inequality, promote social and economic well-being, environmental sustainability and opportunity for all and establish good and open governance of our city and its inhabitants."

Members are required to consider equality and diversity when they make decisions. To support members in their role we offer online Local Government Association developed equality and diversity training to all councillors as part of their induction to their role. This training helps members to understand different equality and diversity issues and ensures that they are able to deliver their duties in accordance with the Councillor Code of Conduct.

We are keen that members play a lead role our equality and diversity work. In November 2021 we launched a cross party Equalities Working Group. The group is comprised of senior officers and members and aims to champion equality and diversity across the Council. The group has continued to meet throughout 2022 and has welcomed external speakers who have shared good practice and offered suggestions for how the Council can build upon its equality and diversity work. Members of the Equalities Working Group receive regular feedback on our progress around equality and have helped to shape the Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2023/24.

4. Next Steps

We are pleased with our ongoing commitment to equality and diversity and the progress we make. However we recognise that further work is required, our Equality and Diversity Action Plan which sets out how we plan to continue working towards achieving our Equality Objectives and the 'excellence level for the EFLG'.

In addition to delivering specific projects and interventions under the action plan, it is crucial to remember that it is incumbent on everyone in Plymouth City Council to play their part. As the Council faces unprecedented budgetary pressures, it is vital that equality and diversity continue to be mainstreamed across the Council.

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Draft Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2023 – 2024

The Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2023 - 2024 supports the Council's equality and diversity ambitions. This document is a live document and will be updated periodically to reflect changing organisational priorities and community needs. It does not reflect all the work taking place within the Council to promote equality.

The equality and diversity actions included within this action plan have been identified around the following:

- **Themes** – the objectives and milestones in this plan have been grouped under four thematic areas. These thematic areas are used in the [Equality Framework for Local Government \(EFLG\) which](#) will be used to benchmark our equality practice and progress. These areas are:
 - Leadership and organisational commitment
 - Understanding and working with our communities
 - Responsive services and customer care
 - A diverse and engaged workforce
- **Equality Objectives** – The Council is required to set equality objectives under the Equality Act (2010). Our objectives were developed through consultation in January 2020 and set our organisational equality priorities for the next four years. Based on the feedback gathered during our consultation we made slight amendments to our equality objectives, which have been agreed upon as the following:
 - We have set one overarching objective to 'celebrate diversity and ensure that Plymouth is a welcoming city'.
 - We have also set four additional equality objectives which are:
 - Pay equality for women, and employees with disabilities in our workforce
 - Supporting our workforce through the implementation of Our People Strategy 2020 – 2024
 - Supporting victims of hate crime so they feel confident to report incidents, and working with, and through our partner organisations to achieve positive outcomes.
 - Ensuring that Plymouth is a city where people from different backgrounds get along well.
- **Outcomes** – these are areas identified as good practice, meeting them will help us to ensure equality and diversity good practice is delivered across the organisation and will allow us to track our progress.

Leadership and organisational commitment				
Context	Effective leadership is key to realising our equality ambitions. Our Chief Executive and Portfolio Holder for equality and diversity set out their commitment to realising the organisation's equality and diversity ambitions in the annual 'Our commitment to equality and diversity' document. The document sets out how the organisation is working hard to challenge discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and understanding and foster good relations within our community.			
Outcome	Action	Measure of success	Timescale	Lead
Our city is a welcoming city for everyone.	Explore how we want to foster community cohesion to ensure that Plymouth is a welcoming city for everyone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstration of our commitment to the 'Welcoming City' agenda through engagement with scrutiny and the publication of a welcoming city strategy. 	Q2 2023/24	Policy & Intelligence Team
Our civic leader continues to demonstrate a commitment to equality and diversity.	Explore how the Lord Mayor's office can engage with 'seldom heard' groups living in Plymouth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Lord Mayor engages with different communities living in Plymouth throughout 2023/24. 	Throughout 2023/24 with review each quarter	Lord Mayor's Office
The Council's commitment to equality is visible to our employees and external stakeholders.	Celebrate diversity within our communications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equality and diversity topics feature within our internal and external communication activities. We mark a range of equality and diversity-related dates on our Equality and Diversity calendar each year internally and externally. We refresh our equality objectives in 2024. 	Throughout 2023/24 with review each quarter	Communications with support from Policy & Intelligence Team and Human Resources

<p>Equality and diversity continues to be recognised as an organisational priority.</p>	<p>Senior officers and members meet to discuss equality and diversity related issues regularly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Corporate Equality and Diversity Group chaired by the Service Director for Human Resources and Organisational Development continues to meet. ▪ The Equalities Working Group receives frequent updates on progress on the Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2023/24. 	<p>Throughout 2023/24</p>	<p>Human Resources & Organisational Development with support from Policy & Intelligence Team</p>
<p>Members feel confident discussing equality and assessing equality implications in their roles.</p>	<p>We provide equality and diversity learning and development opportunities for members.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Co-create with members a bespoke equality and diversity training offer. 	<p>Q1 2023/24</p>	<p>Human Resources & Organisational and Oversight and Governance</p>
<p>Explore how we can remove some of the barriers that people face to accessing volunteering in the city.</p>	<p>Share good practice with employees and our partner organisations to ensure that volunteering opportunities in the city are accessible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to explore how we can make volunteering in Plymouth more inclusive and accessible by working with our partners. 	<p>Q3 2023/24</p>	<p>Public Health</p>

Understanding and working with our communities				
Context	Understanding our communities is key to ensuring that our services are inclusive. We need to continue to work in partnership and continue to build and maintain effective and positive relationships with different organisations to encourage good practice sharing and knowledge exchange. Key to achieving this is ensuring that we have different mechanisms in place to provide opportunities for as many people as possible to participate in public life.			
Outcome	Action	Measure of success	Timescale	Lead
We understand who the different communities living in Plymouth are.	Provide accessible information about the different communities living in Plymouth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated Pen Profiles are published. 	Q1 2023/24	Policy & Intelligence Team
We understand who the different communities living in Plymouth are.	The community builders effectively build relationships within and among communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of community asset maps by the Community Builders. We complete several further appreciative enquiries throughout 2023/24. 	Q4 2023/34	Public Health
We understand who is using our services and contribute towards better understanding health inequality amongst those with protected characteristics.	Work with our partners to carry out in-depth research into health inequality within Plymouth as part of the Health Determinants Research Collaboration programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce a briefing paper outlining the scope of research. We collect and analyse demographic information about our service users. 	Q3 2023/24	Customer and Corporate Services with Public Health.
Under represented communities feel encouraged to participate in local decision making.	The Community Empowerment Programme champions inclusive engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We raise awareness of our Inclusive Engagement Toolkit and Engagement Principles. The Community Empowerment Programme community of practice 	Q3 2023/24	Public Health and Policy and Intelligence Team

		continues to explore and promote inclusive engagement.		
We understand who the different communities living in Plymouth are.	Publish information about our different communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Carried out an in-depth analysis of the 2021 census data to inform the development of the Ward Profiles. ▪ Updated ward profiles are published. 	Q2 2023/24	Policy & Intelligence Team
We support victims of hate incidents/crime.	Raise awareness of the mechanisms for victims to report hate incidents/crime.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We share communication internally and externally to raise awareness of hate incidents/crime reporting mechanisms. ▪ We meaningfully mark Hate Crime Awareness Week. ▪ We review the findings of the University of Plymouth research exploring racism in Plymouth and action any recommendations where appropriate. ▪ We provide training to employees (where appropriate) on how they can report a hate crime. 	Q4 2023/24	Community Connections leads with support from the Safer Community Partnership, Human Resources & Organisational Development and Corporate Communications

Responsive Services and Customer Care				
Context	Responsive Services is key to ensuring that our services meet the ever-changing needs of our residents. It is about using data to understand who does and does not use our services, identifying areas of disadvantage and under- representation and ensuring that equality is fully embedded within our procurement activities.			
Outcomes	Action	Measure of success	Timescale	Lead
Continue to raise awareness of the importance of high quality equality impact assessments.	Employees understand the importance of equality impact assessments and the process that should be followed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Share communications and good practice around completing equality impact assessments. 	Throughout 2023/24 with review each quarter	Policy & Intelligence Team with Communications
Equality and diversity is fully embedded within procurement.	We further embed equality and diversity within our procurement processes and raise awareness amongst employees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Where appropriate equality and diversity is included at various stages of the procurement process including at tender stage. ▪ We strengthen the monitoring and delivery of social value at contract management stage which includes the delivery of equality and diversity related measures where relevant and proportionate. 	Q3 2023/24	Procurement and Policy and Intelligence Team
We have a programme of accessible events.	Increase awareness of the importance of accessibility at events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver equality and diversity training with a particular focus on accessibility to events colleagues. 	Q2 2023/24	Events and Marketing Team
Our services are inclusive.	Improved awareness of the barriers facing different groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Care leavers are supported to reach their potential. ▪ The Mind the Gap project partners continue to share good practice. 	Q4 2023/24	Community Connections with Childrens' Services and Human Resources

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best practice around engaging and employing adults with learning disabilities is shared. 		
We use best practice to combat Violence Against Women and Girls in Plymouth.	Embed recommendations from the Violence Against Women and Girls Commission for Plymouth into our equality and diversity work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the Corporate Equality Group to champion the delivery of the White Ribbon Action Plan. The Violence Against Women and Girls charter is in place. 	Throughout 2023/24	Human Resources and Community Connections

Diverse and Engaged Workforce				
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding our workforce is key to ensuring that our employment practices meet the needs of our employees and service users. We need to understand who does and does not work for us, who applies for jobs with us and who progresses within the organisation. Our People Strategy will help us become a workforce that is adaptable to the changes that the Council will face. It is a blueprint for the organisation and has strong equality, diversity and inclusion themes running through out. The actions below sit alongside and complement our existing People Strategy. 			
Equality Outcomes	Action	Measure of success	Timescale	Lead
We understand the demographics of our workforce.	We analyse workforce data to understand our workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the percentage of employees who have recorded their sensitive information on Core HR by running an internal communications campaign. We publish our Annual Workforce Report. 	Q1 2023/24	Human Resources & Organisational Development

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We publish our Gender Pay Gap Report. 		
There is a good understanding amongst employees of different cultures.	Provide engaging learning and development opportunities to support employees to feel confident discussing equality and diversity and develop cultural awareness and competency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue our equality and diversity training programme and roll out 'class room based' equality and diversity training where appropriate. 	Q4 2023/24	Human Resources & Organisational Development with support from Communications
We understand the different experiences of employees within the Council.	We analyse our employee engagement survey 'The Big Listen' by protected characteristics to better understand employee satisfaction levels across the organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We use the responses from our 'The Big Listen' employee survey to inform our workforce development planning and strategy development. ▪ We recruit and use engagement champions and our staff networks to move forward areas for development. 	Q2 2023/24	Human Resources & Organisational Development
We will develop avenues for employees to come together to discuss equality and diversity.	We will continue to support our employee networks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We have a range of employee groups in place to support discussion about equality and diversity within the Council and provide peer employee support. ▪ We launch a new Armed Forces Family Network. 	Q2 2023/24	Human Resources & Organisational Development

Our organisation ensures the workforce reflects the local labour market.	Encouraging job sharing and encourage departments to advertise jobs as 'suitable for job share'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review our flexible working policy. 	Q3 2023/24	Human Resources & Organisational Development
Our organisation attracts a wide range of talent.	Recruitment panels are trained in good recruitment practices including how to avoid bias.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We deliver training to recruitment managers on inclusive recruitment practices. 	Q3 2023/24	Human Resources & Organisational Development

IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PLAN

To enable the organisation to realise its equality and diversity ambitions, it is important that we ensure that activities in this plan are completed. To do this, it is important that all employees clearly understand the role which they play in relation to this action plan and the wider aim to embed equalities within the organisation.

- The Portfolio Holder who has equality within their portfolio is responsible for championing and promoting equality and holding departments to account.
- The Corporate Management Team are responsible for overseeing the implementation of this plan, championing equality across the organisation and providing challenge where actions are not being completed.
- The Corporate Equality Group members are responsible for leading on the actions identified for their respective departments as well as ensuring that they consider equality and diversity in the way they deliver their services.
- Human Resources & Organisational Development are responsible for ensuring good employment practice within the organisation and provision of learning and development opportunities in addition to the delivery of their specific actions.
- The Policy & Intelligence Team are responsible for ensuring that the organisation is meeting its statutory duty and will coordinate activities in liaison with Human Resources & Organisational Development.
- The Equalities Working Group is responsible for championing and promoting equality and ensuring that there is appropriate member input into the equality and diversity programme.