

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plan 2024-25 – DRAFT

(July 2024 - June 2025)

The proposed Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Plan contains two types of actions; those that are being delivered by services as part of **existing** programmes of work, or **newly** introduced actions. All these actions build upon our ambitions as an ‘Achieving’ Council under the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG) or are in response to recommendations from the Stevenage Equality Commission (SEC). Each action is aligned with an objective of the Council’s Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy (2022) and will underpin the council’s approach to advancing equality, diversity, and inclusion over the next year.

SBC Objective 1: We will understand the diverse needs of our communities and how to meet them effectively.				
Action(s)	Lead Responsibility	Protected Characteristic	Existing / New	Due by
a. The council will continue to foster good community relations and social cohesion through the Community Safety SoSafe Strategy programme of work.	Community Advice & Support	All	Existing	June 2025
b. The council will continue to monitor its approach to Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA) through Service Plans, and how the information is used to inform decision making and the wider understanding of existing and future community needs.	Corporate Policy & Performance	All	Existing	June 2025
c. The council will continue to champion the work of the Stevenage Equalities Commission (SEC) through the facilitation of the SEC Legacy Group. The Legacy Group will work with partners for 12 months to deliver meaningful change in response to the findings of the SEC.	Housing & Neighbourhoods	Race	Existing	June 2025
SBC Objective 2: We will actively engage, encourage, and support local people, groups, and organisations to participate in local democracy to improve opportunity and inclusion.				
Action(s)	Lead Responsibility	Protected Characteristic	Existing / New	Due by

a. The council will strengthen the voice of tenants and leaseholders, including consideration of people's differing needs, through the development and implementation of a Resident Engagement framework .	Housing & Neighbourhoods	All	Existing	June 2025
b. The council will digitally engage with residents as part of our UK Shared Prosperity Fund Local Investment Plan to help shape the approach to the development of local community plans and provide opportunities for people, including those who share protected characteristics, to participate in local democracy.	Housing & Neighbourhoods	All	Existing	June 2025
c. The council and its partners will work together to establish a Civic Leadership Programme that targets and provides support for underrepresented communities who are interested in political representation and standing for public roles.	Housing & Neighbourhoods	Race	Existing	June 2025
SBC Objective 3: We will promote equality, diversity and inclusion through strategic partnerships, service delivery and supply chain(s).				
Action(s)	Lead Responsibility	Protected Characteristic	Existing / New	Due by
a. The Council will review the extent to which its procured services inform and help to uphold and implement our equality objectives.	Procurement	All	Existing	June 2025
b. Through its Healthy Stevenage Partnership , the council will continue to promote activities and events that reduce health inequalities and improve the health and wellbeing of Stevenage residents.	Housing & Neighbourhoods	All	Existing	June 2025
c. Through our ongoing partnership with Mission 44 , the council will provide opportunities for young people to engage with STEM Education and careers, with a particular focus on those who are facing social injustice. This is linked to the council's wider commitments around Enterprise & Skills which is focused on	Housing & Neighbourhoods	Age, Race & Socio-Economic Duty	<u>New</u>	June 2025

ensuring that Stevenage residents are able to make the most of the opportunities on their doorstep.				
SBC Objective 4: We will use local data to shape services so that the needs of our diverse population are met.				
Action(s)	Lead Responsibility	Protected Characteristic	Existing / New	Due by
a. The council will publish the Equality & Diversity Report 23/24 and use the information it contains to help shape its services so that the needs of the diverse population are met.	Corporate Policy & Performance	All	Existing	December 2024
b. The council will publish the Gender Pay Gap report 2023/24 and use its findings to inform its gender pay parity in the workforce	HR	Gender	Existing	March 2025
c. The council will continue to review its workforce data and explore opportunities to collate specific ethnicity data that can help identify and address key issues in line with commitments made as part of UNISON's Anti-Racism Charter.	HR	Race	Existing	April 2025
SBC Objective 5: We aim to improve the diversity of our organisation at all levels so that our communities are represented.				
Action(s)	Lead Responsibility	Protected Characteristic	Existing / New	Due by
a. Through the Making Stevenage Even Better Corporate Plan , the council has committed to the cross-cutting theme of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. This will encourage staff to consider the impact on equalities when designing and delivering services.	Corporate Policy & Performance	All	<u>New</u>	June 2025
b. Through the inclusion of Diversity and Inclusion as a key theme within the Workforce Strategy 2024-27 , following Cabinet approval, the council will commit to continuing to develop its response to improving the diversity of the organisation.	HR	All	<u>New</u>	June 2025

SBC Objective 6: We are committed to ensuring our staff have the values, skills, and knowledge to maintain a positive and inclusive workplace culture that values all employees equally.

Action(s)	Lead Responsibility	Protected Characteristic	Existing / New	Due by
a. The council will work with the Officer Equality Group to develop individuals led 'Champion' workshops that focus on particular EDI subjects. The purpose of the events will be to share understanding and raise awareness.	HR	All	Existing	June 2025
b. The council will support the creation of an LGBTQ+ staff network group to ensure an inclusive workplace through encouraging discussions, events, and initiatives that promote awareness and understanding.	HR	Sexual Orientation	<u>New</u>	June 2025
c. The council will explore the possibility of establishing a Neurodiversity staff network group to ensure an inclusive workplace is in place and informed by discussions, events, and initiatives that promote awareness and understanding.	HR	Disability	<u>New</u>	June 2025
d. The council will continue to promote a positive and inclusive workplace culture, and following the results of the 2024 All Staff Pulse Survey , will develop specific corporate actions to advance inclusion and wellbeing amongst staff.	HR	All	<u>New</u>	June 2025

Table of Terminology

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

An EqIA is a document that helps us to evidence, understand and seek to mitigate impacts that our decisions might have on different types of people.

Protected Characteristics

There are nine protected characteristics within the Equality Act (2010), these are:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender Reassignment
4. Marriage and Civil Partnership
5. Pregnancy and Maternity
6. Race
7. Religion or Belief
8. Sex
9. Sexual Orientation

Although socio-economic duty was removed from the Equality Act 2010, Councillors and Officers are required to consider the impact of their decisions on people who might be disadvantaged because of their social and economic background.

Stevenage Equalities Commission (SEC) Service Plan

The SEC was set up in April 2021 to assess and address racial disparities and inequalities in Stevenage. A document setting out a team's objectives and deliverables for the year.