

# Draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2020 – 2024

## WELCOME

Equality and inclusion are integral to everything we do as a Council, whether it is in how we work with our residents, in the services we provide or through the recruitment of our workforce. We want to do the best we can in equality and inclusion practice, so that we tackle unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, foster good relations between different people and ensure that everyone feels valued, respected and included.

Following the Grenfell tragedy, we have listened to residents and reflected on what we need to do differently as a Council. We aspire to rebuilding trust and reconnecting with our communities by being open, inclusive and putting local people at the heart of decision-making. That is why we have new Council values for how we work: putting communities first, respecting others, acting with integrity and working together. They inform the way in which we involve and empower residents to have their say; how we design and deliver our services; and how we recruit and develop our employees.

Our borough is home to communities from all parts of the world, many of whom have lived here for generations and shaped the special character of Kensington and Chelsea. Being in the heart of London we have incredible opportunities but, like other parts of London, we also face significant challenges. Some of our residents are struggling to find well-paid and secure work, to access services, to get skills and qualifications and require improved housing.

Our Council Plan sets out our ambition to create a borough where all residents can fulfil their potential and access services. This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy supports those commitments. It sets out the high standards we expect of ourselves. It explains how we will shape services so that they address inequality and how we will work with residents, community and our partners so that we:

- *Deliver **equality** of opportunity and outcome for our residents and our employees, whether that be at work, in health, in housing or education. To do that we may need to treat some people differently, to make sure that everyone gets the support they need to be successful.*
- *Value and recognise people's diverse skills and abilities, which means taking difference into account in everything that we do. For our employees, **diversity** is an opportunity to bring together and develop a unique mix of individuals and skills, that reflect our communities and help us serve them better.*
- *Work together to create a safe, open, accessible and **inclusive** borough and workplace - where everybody thrives and feels valued, and the lived experience of our residents is heard.*

In the future, I want people in Kensington and Chelsea, and beyond, to look to the Council as a model of good practice in equality, diversity and inclusion. This strategy is just the start of the journey.

**COUNCILLOR ANNE CYRON**

**Lead Member for Communities**

## OUR APPROACH

The Council is committed to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in everything we do. This means we need to reflect this in our plans and policies, in the way we design and deliver services, in how we employ and develop staff and most importantly in how we work with our residents.

The Strategy sets out our commitments and the Council's Equality Objectives for 2020 – 2024. We have developed these using information about the borough as well as the views of residents and partners.

Through the Strategy, we aim to meet the Equality Act 2010 and specific requirements placed on the Council through the Public Sector Equality Duty. This means that the Council has regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

Our legal duties mean the Council must publish information to show how we are meeting this duty in our role as an employer and a service provider and how this affects people with protected characteristics<sup>1</sup>. However, people can experience discrimination or disadvantage as a result of combination of things that make up their identity. Creating an inclusive borough also means recognising and minimising other causes of inequality or exclusion, often inter-connected and mutually reinforcing: such as low income, social isolation, living in poor housing or poor health.

## OUR COMMITMENT

We seek to respect, value and celebrate differences among the communities we serve and within our own workforce. These differences include the characteristics protected under the Equality Act but are not limited to those. We recognise other important differences in the backgrounds and life circumstances of our service users, such as socio-economic background or being a carer.

We are both committed and determined to deliver fair, accessible, and relevant services, which recognise and respond to the needs and expectations of **all** the different communities and communities of interest that live and work in Kensington and Chelsea.

In promoting fairness and advancing equality, we want to build a strong sense of belonging and pride for everyone who lives in, works for or visits the borough. We want people of all backgrounds to feel valued and able to participate fully in, and contribute to, building a strong community within Kensington and Chelsea.

We will deliver on our commitments in the following ways:

- **In service delivery:**

We will involve our residents in shaping and delivering services that anticipate and respond appropriately to the needs of our diverse service users and residents.

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<sup>1</sup> Protected characteristics are the nine groups protected under the Equality Act 2010. These are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

- To ensure our services meet the needs of those who live in, visit or work in Kensington and Chelsea
- Foster a culture of learning and continuous improvement, using evidence (data and feedback from our diverse service users) to inform our approach
- Provide services that are fair, relevant and accessible to the communities we serve
- Make all Council buildings accessible where practicable
- Make all Council communications accessible, and provide interpretation and translation where appropriate
- Train all employees to improve the services delivered to our diverse communities
- Monitor and review services and policies to prevent unlawful or unjustified discrimination and aim to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relationships with our diverse communities.

- **As an employer:**

We will recruit, develop and retain a workforce that reflects the diversity of our residents, and we will leverage that rich diversity to grow the skills, talent and innovative thinking needed to continuously improve the quality and delivery of our services.

- Develop an inclusive and flexible working culture that values and respects difference
- Work to build a workforce that at every level more closely reflects diverse service users and residents
- Provide a safe and accessible workplace where differing needs are actively anticipated
- Take action to ensure a working environment that is free from unlawful discrimination and harassment
- Provide equal access to learning and development opportunities for all employees
- Encourage and support all employees to be involved and reach their full potential
- Deliver recruitment processes that are fair, transparent and fully accessible
- Ensure we have an open and transparent equal pay policy.

- **As a procurer of goods and services:**

We will commission high quality services that respond effectively and sensitively to differing needs and, where possible, are provided by those who understand and reflect our service user demographics.

- Set expectations that contractors, suppliers and funded service providers abide by the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty by providing an effective and appropriate service to all communities on our behalf
- Encourage locally owned/run businesses to bid for work.

- **By monitoring our service delivery and employment practice to address unequal outcomes:**

We will continuously check and review the services we provide, learning from data and information we gather, alongside what our residents and employees tell us.

- Set specific **equality objectives** with the aim of addressing the main areas of inequality
- Use evidence to help us to design our services and ensure our workforce reflects the people we serve

- Monitor equality data to ensure that our services and employment opportunities are accessible to all
- Complete Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) to consider the impact that our policies and decisions may have on different groups
- Where possible, collect diversity information about our residents and service users to inform our policies and services to effectively meet service user needs
- Collect diversity information about our employees and use it to check that our employment policies and practices are fair, open and transparent and to help us build an accessible and inclusive working environment
- Share best practice with our partners so that we can collaborate, learn from others and improve.

## **OUR BOROUGH**

The diversity of this borough has always been one of its greatest strengths. Being a more inclusive organisation will help the Council to listen more closely to our communities and in turn, make decisions that are informed by diverse points of view.

To develop the strategy and objectives, we have used information on the borough and what we have heard from our communities, partners, staff and voluntary and community sector about their ambitions, priorities and their lived experience. Throughout the development of the Strategy we have tried to have in mind the people behind the numbers and bring this together with what residents and communities have told us.

Our communities come from all over the world with over half our residents born outside of the UK. This has profoundly shaped the character of the area and we value that diversity and we will continue to foster inclusiveness.

Kensington and Chelsea is an area of huge social and cultural diversity, which includes significant differences in income, employment and skill levels. Like the rest of London, the borough has areas where people have different life circumstances, including those with protected characteristics. Areas in Kensington and Chelsea rank in some of the most deprived areas in the country (Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2019). Nine of these areas are located in Dalgarno, St Helen's and Golborne wards but there are also pockets of deprivation in Chelsea Riverside and Earl's Court wards. While many residents in these areas face challenges of low income and difficulties in the labour market, these are also areas bursting with creativity and community life and the data looked at cannot fully describe this diversity and unique character. We will continue to provide adult skills and employment support services in community settings and in areas of the borough where we know people need it.

Kensington and Chelsea has one of the highest life expectancy in the country overall, but this varies between the north and south of the borough and between home owners, private renters and those living in social housing. While there are limits to the extent to which the Council can affect overall inequality, by focusing efforts collectively and in partnership, we can improve access to opportunities and narrow the gap in key areas, including skills, employment and health.

We are already making progress, Kensington and Chelsea has the highest educational attainment in London – in this borough a higher proportion of state school pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds win places at university than anywhere else in the country. Within our adult learning provision over three

quarters of our learners are female and from Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds, with a further 19 per cent having declared a learning disability or difficulty. Providing a wide range of courses in accessible venues we want to ensure that we are providing affordable skills and training that equips residents for the future.

## **OUR WORKFORCE (Figures from 2018-19)**

We recognise that our workforce is one of our key strengths where respect for one another, and recognition of our differences, lie at the heart of our Council values.

Our workforce data shows that 60 per cent of our employees are female, which has increased from 2017-18. In addition, women make up 46 per cent of senior management positions. Of those employees who disclosed their ethnicity, a quarter come from BAME backgrounds which is particularly representative of the local area. For BAME employees in senior management positions, this falls to ten per cent. Just under a third of people who work here are under 40 work and they make up 18 per cent of senior managements positions. Information about disability, religion and sexual orientation are often hard to capture, and this is reflected in our workforce demographics statistics. Employees who have declared a disability make up three per cent of the total workforce and six per cent of senior management. However, we have a large non response to these monitoring questions and these figures are likely to be higher.

We aim to recruit and retain a diverse workforce that is representative of the communities we serve. It is an aim we are making progress on; however, we recognise that there are gaps in our understanding, especially in terms of the non response to many of these categories.

We will continue to improve the data we hold and make efforts to address issues, notably information on disability and sexual orientation as well as looking further into the under representation of ethnic minorities at more senior levels.

## **OUR EQUALITY OBJECTIVES**

Our equality objectives reflect the cross-cutting themes in our **Council Plan and People Strategy**. Equality, diversity and inclusion need to be viewed as “business as usual” for the Council but we also need to target and do some proactive work to tackle specific inequalities for different groups, this is reflected in our objectives.

Taken together these five high-level equality objectives relate to each aspect of the Council’s role as an employer, a provider of services and in our role in bringing communities together. They are supported by more specific objectives within Directorates, which form our action plan:

- 1. Narrowing the Gap:** We will improve outcomes for our residents, with a focus on narrowing the gap between different communities and seek to ensure that individuals have equal opportunity to fulfil their potential.

### **Why is this important?**

The Council has duties and powers to provide a wide range of services. Many of these services can play a role in creating a more level playing field for people who face inequality. The challenges we face need action by a range of stakeholders and the Council has a leading role to play in bringing together

agencies across the private, public and voluntary sector to tackle inequalities and exclusion across the borough.

### **What we will do?**

The percentage of people aged over 65 living alone in Kensington and Chelsea is higher than both the London average and the national average. We will continue to work with our older population to support independent living and minimise isolation and loneliness through our services. As our customer services move more towards transacting digitally, we will support and monitor our residents without the ability, or access, to use online services by providing more outreach support as well as having telephone and face-to-face resources for those that need more assistance.

We will continue to target communities underrepresented in sports and physical activity, ensuring our leisure centres and offerings are inclusive, and reflect the needs of our residents through this. We will support our residents to respond to the changing nature of the economy and increasing interest from our communities, in self-employment and starting up a business. We will continue to encourage and commission culturally appropriate provision that help people move from education and training into work, particularly for young people. This includes enabling and investing in alternative pathways into work, such as volunteering, work experience, vocational routes and supported employment. More detail of this is available in the Council's Economy Strategy, [Live, work and learn: Our plan for a successful local economy](#).

- 2. Community Involvement:** We will engage openly with our residents and service users, seeking to capture all points of view to make better informed decisions. Wherever possible, we will use the talents and skills within our communities to co-design and commission better services. We will work widely to involve local people and abide by the [Council's Charter for Public Participation](#).

### **Why is this important?**

Empowering communities, involving them in decision making and listening to the lived experiences of all our residents is a key goal for the Council. We cannot tackle inequalities and exclusion without fostering good relations between people and understanding our diverse communities.

### **What will we do?**

Working with local people, residents and community partners in the design and delivery of community projects, including the Grenfell Recovery Strategy Community Delivery Programme, our local PREVENT project covering the Young Person's and parenting projects. We will continue to ensure that we carry out robust consultation and engagement activity where developing improvement programmes in health, employment and skills.

- 3. Prevention and early intervention:** By focusing on prevention and early intervention, particularly in Adults; and Children's Services, we can ensure that health and social care needs of the whole community are being addressed now and, in the future, for adults, children and families.

### **Why is this important?**

Early intervention means identifying and providing effective early support to those who are at risk of poor outcomes. Effective early intervention works to prevent problems occurring, or to tackle them

head-on when they do, before problems get worse. It also helps to foster a whole set of personal strengths and skills that prepare a child for adult life.

### **What will we do?**

We will continue to work with our vulnerable children and parents/carers to ensure they are able to access Children's Centres, Health Visitors and Early Help services.

We will work with our residents affected by Violence Against Women and Girls and provide access to specialist services focusing on preventing harm, reducing risk and increasing immediate and long-term safety.

- 4. Increasing Diversity:** We will aim to increase the diversity of our workforce at every level to more closely reflect our residents and service users and bring it closer to our communities. Having a workforce that is diverse in the widest possible sense and in which diversity of background and thought is valued.

### **Why is this important?**

To achieve our vision, we must develop a culture that has inclusion and equality at the heart of everything we do. Having a diverse workforce brings a diversity of experiences and perspectives which will help us better meet the needs of residents. This is not just about the Council's role as an employer but a genuinely inclusive and diverse organisation is the foundation of commissioning and delivering services that meet the needs of our diverse communities and treat citizens with respect.

### **What will we do?**

The Council will increase employment opportunities offered to our local communities through work experience, supported internships and local recruitment. In addition, we will provide apprenticeships for both our employees and residents.

A clear recruitment and resourcing strategy will be implemented with equality, diversity and inclusion at its core.

- 5. Building an inclusive workforce and cohesive borough:** To help attract, recruit and retain the best people for the job, we will develop an open, collaborative and inclusive working environment where the principles of fairness and wellbeing is promoted, and everyone is encouraged to reach their full potential.

### **Why is this important?**

Creating a culture which embeds equality and inclusion across our activities, and adopting the right leadership model, structures and processes will enable us to achieve the high standards we have identified for ourselves. This means showing that we value diversity in how we all speak and behave every day, not just when we are talking about equality. To achieve our vision, we must develop a culture that has inclusion and equality at the heart of everything we do. Inclusive cultures do not just happen, our leaders, managers and all of our employees must understand and model inclusive behaviours.

### **How will we do it?**

Through our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion programme we will continue to engage senior management, promoting a culture of inclusive leadership. We will continually review our policies, practice and processes to ensure they are open and transparent and review our gender and ethnicity pay gap analysis with the aim to reduce any gaps identified. We will deliver mandatory training on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion across all Council departments and improve our approach to flexible working within the Council.

### **MAKING IT HAPPEN**

We want to be the best we can be in equality, diversity and inclusion practice. We are committed to being a learning organisation, working to improve our practice and seeking to address inequality in Kensington and Chelsea.

We will publish information explaining the progress we are making towards achieving our equality objectives and review how we are doing. Each year we will agree and refresh a council wide action plan, setting out in more detail what we are doing to work towards each objective. We will also seek to listen to and understand the diverse needs of communities and improve how we collect information across different services so we can understand impact.

Everyone working for the Council has a part to play in achieving the aims of this strategy. Councillors and senior employees have a responsibility because active, visible leadership is essential. Staff representatives, including our diversity champions and employee groups have an important role to play in actively promoting equality, diversity and inclusion.

We want to be open and transparent about our progress, sharing information and learning from experience. We will review our equality objectives at least every four years or more regularly where there are has been a clear change of needs or significant new data.

Information from this document can be made available in alternative formats and in different languages. If you require further assistance, please use the contact details below.

### **Arabic**

يمكن توفير المعلومات التي وردت في هذا المستند بصيغ بديلة ولغات أخرى. إذا كنت في حاجة إلى مزيد من المساعدة، الرجاء استخدام بيانات الاتصال الواردة أدناه.

### **Farsi**

اطلاعات حاوی در این مدارک به صورتهای دیگر و به زبانهای مختلف در دسترس می باشد. در صورت نیاز به کمک بیشتر لطفاً از جزئیات تماس ذکر شده در ذیل استفاده کنید.

### **French**

Les informations présentées dans ce document peuvent vous être fournies dans d'autres formats et d'autres langues. Si vous avez besoin d'une aide complémentaire, veuillez utiliser les coordonnées ci-dessous.

### **Portuguese**

A informação presente neste documento pode ser disponibilizada em formatos alternativos e em línguas diferentes. Se desejar mais assistência, use por favor os contactos fornecidos abaixo.

### **Somali**

Macluumaadka dokumentigan waxaa lagu heli karaa qaabab kale iyo luuqado kala duwan. Haddii aad u baahan tahay caawinaad intaas dhaafsiisan fadlan isticmaal xiriirka faahfaahinta hoose.

### **Spanish**

La información en este documento puede facilitarse en formatos alternativos y en diferentes idiomas. Si necesita más ayuda por favor utilice la siguiente información de contacto.

### **Additional Assistance**

If you require information in a different format or need additional assistance in completing the survey, please email us at [consult@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:consult@rbkc.gov.uk)