

REPORT TO:	FULL COUNCIL	AGENDA ITEM: 11
DATE OF MEETING:	2 NOVEMBER 2023	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	LEADERSHIP TEAM	OPEN DOC:
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	Dr JUSTIN IVES (EXT. 5700)	
SUBJECT:	EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23 AND DIVERSITY CALENDAR 2024	
WARD (S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: G

1.0 Recommendations

1.1 That the Council approves the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion annual report for 2022/23 (**Appendix A**) and the Diversity Calendar for 2024 (**Appendix B**).

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To present the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion annual report 2022/23 that showcases and highlights the activity carried out by the Council and its partners in 2022/23 (**Appendix A**).
- 2.2 To approve the Diversity Calendar 2024 of events and festivals to be recognised and supported by the Council (**Appendix B**).

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 Equality, diversity and inclusion is at the heart of the Council's activity to ensure customers, residents and staff are treated fairly and have equal and fair access to the services it provides.
- 3.2 Following extensive consultation with residents and stakeholders in autumn 2020, the Council approved the Council's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2021-25 along with a four year action plan. Each year, an annual report is produced to highlight and showcase the work completed by the Council and its partners during 2022/23 (**Appendix A**) and to meet our statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.3 The action plan has five high level objectives that are:
1. Encourage and enable a skilled and diverse workforce to build a culture of equality and inclusion in everything we do.
 2. Demonstrate inclusive leadership, partnership and a clear organisational commitment to being a leader in equality, diversity, and inclusion in the District.
 3. Involve and enable our diverse communities to play an active role in society and put the resident's voice at the heart of decision-making.
 4. Deliver responsive services and customer care that is accessible and inclusive to individual's needs and respects cultural differences.
 5. Understand our diverse communities and embed that understanding in how we shape policy and practice across the Council.

- 3.4 The Action Plan continues to be implemented and we are making good progress which is reported to the EDI Steering Group on a quarterly basis.

There were some areas where we need to make further progress that included;

- Design and implement an annual employee survey which is now being completed in November 2023.
- Using an industry recognised equality index to assess achievements and progress in LGBTQ+ inclusion. This has been considered by the EDI Steering Group and a proposal for this will be put before Leadership Team and the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Steering Group in 2023/24.
- Collate and maintain data on equality, diversity and inclusion as a shared resource available on the Council's internal and external web pages. This continues to be progressed and enriched with information from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) Census data which is being released in stages and our website will be updated as and when we receive additional data.

Overview of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2022/23

- 3.5 The report has been developed from information collated from across the Council, partners and updates given on a quarterly basis against the action plan. This gives a very clear insight into the work being completed to embed equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of everything we do.
- 3.6 Significant progress continues to be made against our five equality objectives but more importantly work continues to consider the different needs and aspirations of our community and other groups or individuals that we interact with. Whilst the Equality Act 2010 provides a framework to support and protect individuals under nine stated protected characteristics, we evidence in the report the work also completed to support the most vulnerable in the community through the provision of advice, support and going further to reach people who may need our support.
- 3.7 Over the past three years, worldwide and national events have really exposed people to different challenges and the Council, with its partners, continue to provide a vital link and supporting network for people to access support or information they need. It is accepted that we need to do more and working with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group to monitor and support the delivery of our key objectives and actions, the Council is well placed to deliver this vital and important work.

Diversity Calendar 2024

- 3.8 A key objective from the action plan is to update and approve our Diversity Calendar 2024 (**Appendix B**). This provides a framework for the Council to commemorate events relating to the characteristics that are not only protected by the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation) but also other significant national events recognising historic events or supporting ongoing causes.
- 3.9 Each event on the Calendar will be supported by the Council with information on its website, social media campaigns or where appropriate the display of approved materials such as posters or other resources.
- 3.10 All events will be monitored and a review completed on the response from customers and residents. The Calendar will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis and be subject to approval of the Council.

4.0 Financial and Corporate Implications

- 4.1 None arising from the report.

5.0 Community Implications

- 5.1 The Annual Report 2022/23 (**Appendix A**) highlights the work completed by the Council and its partners in supporting our community with different events, support and other actions to make our services more inclusive and accessible. As a public sector body we have statutory duties to comply with and this report evidence how we are working towards and achieving our duties.
- 5.2 This report will be made available on our website and our customers, residents and partners can continue to see the progress we are making and some of the actions we will be undertaking in the next 12 months.

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 The Council has made considerable progress over the year following the approval of the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2021-25 and Action Plan. With the support from all service areas and partners, this progress will continue to be sustained over the coming year with work completed in the areas referenced in the action plan 2023/24.
- 6.2 It is apparent that the needs of the Council's customers and residents will change over the coming year, especially around issues arising from the recovery from the pandemic and the financial hardship has impacted on residents in the District. It is important that the Council continues to provide support either directly or with partners to help and support people and in particular making the Council services as fair and accessible as possible to make South Derbyshire a great place to live, visit and invest.

7.0 Background papers

- 7.1 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021-25 and Action Plan.