



Committee Report Checklist

Please submit the completed checklists with your report. If final draft report does not include all the information/sign offs required, your item will be delayed until the next meeting cycle.

Stage 1

Report checklist – responsibility of report owner

ITEM	Yes / No	Date
Councillor engagement / input from Chair prior to briefing	Yes	9/3/26
Relevant Group Head review	Yes	28/2/26
MAT+ review (to have been circulated at least 5 working days before Stage 2)	Yes	17/3/26
This item is on the Forward Plan for the relevant committee		
	Reviewed by	
Finance comments (circulate to Finance)	Yes	26/03/26
Risk comments (circulate to Lee O'Neil)		
Legal comments (circulate to Legal team)	L Heron	4/3/36
HR comments (if applicable)		

For reports with material financial or legal implications the author should engage with the respective teams at the outset and receive input to their reports prior to asking for MO or s151 comments.

Do not forward to stage 2 unless all the above have been completed.

Stage 2

Report checklist – responsibility of report owner

ITEM	Completed by	Date rec'd
Monitoring Officer commentary – at least 5 working days before MAT	L Heron	17/3/26
S151 Officer commentary – at least 5 working days before MAT	T Collier	24.3.26
Commissioner engagement	J. Kingston o.b.o. Cmmrs	31/3/26
	Delete as applicable:	No issues Comments in S. 7
Confirm final report cleared by MAT		

Corporate Policy and Resources Committee

Date of meeting 20 April 2026

Title	Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report Author	Sandy Muirhead Group Head Commissioning and Transformation Katy Frame HR Business Partner
Ward(s) Affected	All Wards
Exempt	No
Exemption Reason	N/A
Corporate Priority	Community Environment Services
Recommendations	Committee is asked to: Approve the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.
Reason for Recommendation	To both complete the Equality Diversity and Inclusion work of the Council and to meet audit requirements.

1. Executive summary of the report (*expand detail in Key Issues section below*)

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An audit in early 2025 identified gaps in our coverage of EDI at the Council and one of the actions to fulfil was to develop an Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Though the Council endeavours to treat everyone fairly and has engendered this attitude through workplace training we need a formal EDI Strategy to confirm this and enable improved annual reporting on workforce EDI.
This is what we want to do about it	These are the next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To agree the Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To agree and then publish the Strategy and publish annual progress updates and EDI workforce data.

2. Key issues

- 2.1 Local government must ensure everyone is treated with dignity, fairness and equal access to opportunities. Spelthorne is committed to upholding these principles.
- 2.2 Our workplace must maintain effective practices, cultures and behaviours that enable staff to engage in their roles and support our communities. A strong approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) enhances organisational performance by drawing on a wide range of backgrounds, experiences and perspectives. Diverse and inclusive teams are more innovative, make better decisions and drive overall improved outcomes.
- 2.3 An EDI audit was completed in 2025 and recommended various actions to strengthen our approach to EDI. Most actions have been delivered, and the presentation of an EDI Strategy is the final outstanding action.
- 2.4 Although the Council's approach to EDI is outlined on the website, the Council does not have a formal EDI strategy in place just an EDI statement and objectives. Given Local Government Reorganisation the proposed Strategy is concise and sets clear objectives for the Council's final year.
- 2.5 The strategy will inevitably be superseded by the early work of the shadow authority and therefore before 31 March 2027 there may be a need to converge this strategy with a new West Surrey EDI strategy.
- 2.6 Spelthorne does provide annual mandatory EDI training for staff, includes an EDI presentation as part of induction for new staff and has established equality objectives and an EDI statement.
- 2.7 The Council publishes annual workforce data, including gender pay gap information and conducts equality impact assessments where relevant.
- 2.8 The Council has also ensured it celebrates/demonstrates diversity and inclusion through various activities throughout the year. This includes being an Armed Forces Employer, undertaking mental health initiatives, recognising key dates celebrating our communities and their diversity and ensuring we have new accessible and inclusive playgrounds
- 2.9 Training remains a key priority. While staff currently complete annual mandatory EDI training via Workrite and receive introductory EDI content during induction the Council intend to commission an external provider to deliver more comprehensive training. Potentially this training will be provided by another Council via their experienced training and development officer to reduce cost. Group Leaders have also agreed that post-election Councillors will receive additional EDI training.
- 2.10 Where appropriate Equality Impacts Assessments are undertaken on projects and strategies. These are being collated for reference and monitoring purposes into a central log.

3. Options appraisal and proposal

- 3.1 **Option 1** To agree the Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Strategy.

- Pros Ensure audit and legislative requirements are met, and provide a clear and easily implemented strategy, reinforcing staff responsibilities under EDI

3.2 **Option 2 Not to agree the Strategy**

- Pros Reduces EDI workload
- Cons - Does not meet required audit or ethical standards creating a reputational risk

4. **Risk implications**

- 4.1 **Strategic risk** The Strategy may not be fully implemented due to competing corporate priorities, limiting its impact. **Mitigation** - Maintain visibility of EDI within the organisation using communications and workforce reporting
- 4.2 **Operational Risk** Additional workload to fulfil the public sector duty in full could stretch already limited staff capacity, delaying delivery of actions and there is a risk of the Council failing in its duty. **Mitigation** Allocate dedicated officer time for EDI tasks and phase implementation to avoid pressure peaks.
- 4.3 **Financial risk** Commissioning external training and improving reporting processes may require additional funding not currently budgeted. If insufficiently resourced, actions may not be delivered to the expected standard. **Mitigation** Secure early budget approval for training (in progress). Explore low cost or partnership-based training providers such as trainers from other local authorities (in progress). Build reporting improvements into existing systems ie information into iTrent (HR system) where appropriate or use project monitoring to record Equality Impact Assessments
- 4.4 **Legal/compliance risk** Failure to meet EDI commitments or audit expectations could expose the Council to compliance concerns or findings. **Mitigation** Embed EDI considerations fully into all Committee reports and service decisions.
- 4.5 **Reputational risk** Not delivering the Strategy or failing to demonstrate progress could lead to reputational damage, especially given the Council's commitment to fairness and inclusion. **Mitigation**. Publish annual progress updates and EDI workforce data.
- 4.6 **Cultural/engagement risk** Staff or Councillors may not fully engage with the Strategy or training, reducing its effectiveness. **Mitigation** Training is already mandatory for staff and Councillors via Workrite. Projects Team and HR to provide specific guidance to make Strategy practical and relevant e.g. for Equality Impact Assessments.
- 4.7 **Data and reporting risk** Incomplete or inconsistent EDI data collection could hinder annual reporting and reduce transparency. **Mitigation** Continue to use employee data stored within the HR system iTrent to produce reports on workforce diversity. Encourage staff to update their personal details.

5. **Financial implications**

- 5.1 There will be a training cost, but this is not expected to be excessive, and costs are currently being sought. However, this should not impact approval of the strategy and training is an extra to the objectives within the strategy.
- 5.2 Any potential costs will be covered by the existing budget and will not cause extra pressure to the council.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 The Council is required to comply with legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 6.2 The proposed Strategy sets the Council's approach to meeting its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 and assists the Council in complying with its statutory obligations.
- 6.3 Adoption of new policies and Human Resources are within the area of responsibility for Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.

Corporate implications

7. Commissioners' comments

- 7.1 It is recognised that this strategy is quite short but given the Council will cease to exist in one year this strategy will inevitably be superseded by the early work of the shadow authority so no issues at this stage.

8. S151 Officer comments

- 8.1 The S151 Officer confirm that all financial implications have been taken into account and that the recommendations are fully funded from within the 2026/27 budget.

9. Monitoring Officer comments

- 9.1 The Monitoring Officer confirms that the relevant legal implications have been taken into account.

10. Procurement comments

- 10.1 There are no procurement implications arising directly from this report and the proposed Strategy. Any contracts and arrangements for training and support relating to the Strategy must comply with the Council's Contract Standing Orders.

11. Equality and Diversity

The Strategy will strengthen our Equality and Diversity actions and provide clear guidance for all staff and Councillors. It will also demonstrate that we are meeting our responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty

12. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications

- 12.1 Equality Diversity and Inclusion is part of the social aspect of sustainability and often the vulnerable are the most impacted by climate change.

13. Other considerations

- 13.1 None

14. Timetable for implementation

- 14.1 Strategy will be fully implemented on agreement by Committee

15. Contact

- 15.1 Sandy Muirhead Group Head Commissioning and Transformation
Katy Frame HR Business Partner
- 15.2 .

***Please submit any material questions to the Committee Chair and Officer
Contact by two days in advance of the meeting.***

Background papers:. There are none

Appendices:

List as Appendix A. Proposed EDI Strategy