

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy Overview

1. Introduction

Spelthorne Borough is committed to creating an inclusive environment where all individuals - residents, employees, Councillors and stakeholders - are treated fairly and equitably. This strategy outlines our approach to embedding Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) across governance, service delivery, and workforce practices. It aligns with our statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010, including compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty, and reflects our ambition to lead by example in promoting fairness and respect.

2. Our legal responsibilities

The Council will meet all legal duties in respect of equality and diversity under the Equality Act 2010 which protects people from discrimination on the basis of the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Act contains an integrated Public Sector Equality Duty, which requires all public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other unlawful conduct prohibited by the act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic
- foster good relations between people who share and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic

We recognise there may be additional characteristics that impact people in Spelthorne and their ability to access services and/or participate in public life.

3. Our Objectives

i. Eliminate discrimination

We will do this by:

- Reviewing and updating policies to remove bias
- Ensuring fair protocols in employment, procurement, and services

ii. Advance equality of opportunity

We will do this by:

- Tailoring services to ensure accessibility for all users
- Identifying additional characteristics of our community and targeting outreach for marginalised groups
- Ensuring recruitment campaigns and development opportunities are accessible to all

iii. Foster good relations

We will do this by:

- Strengthening engagement with diverse communities to co-design services
- Offering accessible communication channels
- Building partnerships with local advocacy groups and charities

iv. **EDI in governance & policy**

We will do this by:

- Embedding EDI principles into all policies and decision-making processes
- Improving our Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) records. Ensuring EIAs are undertaken for all relevant projects and service changes, and reviewed throughout the duration of the project
- Ensuring compliance with legal frameworks and best practice standards.

v. **Improve data & transparency**

We will do this by:

- Publishing annual workforce data and four-yearly equality objectives
- Strengthening data collection from our workforce and service users

vi. **Build capability & awareness**

We will do this by:

- Delivering mandatory EDI training for all staff and elected members
- Promoting awareness campaigns to celebrate diversity and challenge discrimination
- Empowering staff networks and EDI champions

4. Governance & Leadership

- Chaired by a senior manager, we will continue to support our employee-led Inclusivity group
- Report biannual progress to Audit Committee and publish updates for transparency.

5. Measuring Success

- **Workforce Diversity:** Increased representation of underrepresented groups.
- **Community Satisfaction:** Improved engagement and service accessibility scores.
- **External Recognition:** Maintain Disability Confident Status

6. Our Commitment

This strategy is a continuous journey, not a one-time initiative. By embedding EDI into our culture and operations, we aim to deliver fairer outcomes for all and strengthen trust in local government.

Approved/agreed by.....(INSERT DATE)