

Salford City Council

# Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

Version 1  
August 2021

**Tackling Inequalities.**

**The  
Salford  
Way.**

**Salford City Council's vision** is to develop an inclusive culture where all individuals are respected and treated fairly, where diversity is celebrated and where everyone, regardless of background, can reach their full potential.

## Introduction

We are pleased to present Salford City Council's Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. This strategy supports our vision of developing an inclusive culture where individuals are respected and treated fairly, where diversity is celebrated and where everyone regardless of background can reach their full potential.

To deliver our Great Eight priorities and the city's broader Salford Equality Strategy, we need to have a workforce that is truly reflective of the communities and residents that we serve. Salford is becoming increasingly ethnically and culturally diverse and it is vital that our workforce understands and engages with our different communities and our residents see themselves represented in the services we provide.

Salford is a place for everyone to thrive, where everyone cares and counts and we want Salford City Council to be 'a great place to work.'

Through this Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy, the Salford Equality Strategy, our council Equality Objectives and our council values we are committed to building and sustaining a diverse and inclusive workplace

where all of our people feel valued and included, have the opportunity to be heard, as well as opportunities to develop. We want to continue developing a culture which respects and trusts individuals and where everyone feels able to fully contribute and be their whole self when at work.

We know the pandemic has exacerbated inequalities faced by many people and communities and we are committed to tackling these. As our city recovers from the pandemic, we want to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion is at the heart of everything we do in Salford and our workforce is no exception.

Though we have made progress over the years, there is still more work to do to create an environment where everyone has equal voice and opportunities to develop, irrespective of their age, disability, ethnicity, faith/belief, gender identity, race, sex, sexual identity or socio-economic background.



**Cllr Barbara Bentham,**  
Executive Support Member for  
Workforce and Industrial Relations



**Cllr Sharmina August,**  
Lead Member for Inclusive Economy,  
Anti-Poverty and Equalities

## Message from Tom Stannard, Chief Executive

Since taking up my post as Chief Executive at Salford City Council, I have been clear that workforce equality, diversity and inclusion is one of my top priorities. I talk about Salford being a diverse, vibrant and tolerant city and I believe our workforce should be the same.

This workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy sets out for the first time our organisational vision, commitment and priorities which have all been developed through engaging and listening to our people about what is important to them. It is the first vital step in bringing about change and the building block on which we can now develop and deliver the right actions that have the greatest impact.

Our workforce are critical in achieving our vision for a better and fairer Salford for all, and delivering our Great 8 priorities. In line with our values we need to create an environment where difference of background, experience and thought is welcomed and valued. I believe ongoing engagement and dialogue on this agenda is central to achieving our vision and starts with understanding people's personal experiences and being brave enough to have honest and sometimes difficult conversations.

Whilst EDI is the responsibility of everyone and championing this must happen at all levels and right across the organisation, I believe visible leadership is essential. The Corporate Management Team have been instrumental in developing this strategy and are firmly committed to the priorities outlined. I have also talked openly about my own personal motivation on this agenda through lived experience and therefore look forward to further discussions on delivering these priorities over the coming months.



## Our journey so far...

Salford City Council is passionate about diversity, inclusion, fairness and equality of opportunity for all and central to our approach remain our values of Pride, Passion, People and Personal Responsibility. Over the last few years, progress has been made in promoting a positive, diverse, and inclusive working environment for all. Some examples of the work we have done so far includes:

- Working with our three established staff groups (BAME staff group, LGBTQ+ staff group, and Equal in Salford, our staff disability staff group) and our Trade Union representatives to strengthen engagement and voice and to work on the issues that matter.
- A Black Lives Matter Champions group set up within our People Directorate to discuss issues and share good practice across the service.
- Our commitment to the Greater Manchester Race Equality Standard to collectively work together as public sector employers to tackle workforce race inequality across Greater Manchester.
- Working with Stonewall for the fourth consecutive year to improve LGBTQ+ inclusion and visibility in the workplace, which has seen the council ranking rise on the UK Workplace Equality Index
- Continuing to hold disability confident status ensuring that we regularly assess and benchmark our practices and policies to ensure they are accessible and inclusive.

- Setting up and engaging with our carers network has provided valuable insight to enable a range of guidance and support to be developed and SCC is also a member of Employers for Carers
- Reducing our gender pay gap each year since reporting began and identifying targeted actions. An example within our Service Reform Directorate is signing up to Tech She Can Charter to increase the number of women working in technology roles.
- Working with our Place Directorate to consider ways to improve engagement and representation on EDI issues across frontline services.
- Awareness raising campaigns, education sessions and celebration events for the workforce have taken place recently (International Women's Day, Anti-Racism Day, Trans Day of Visibility, International Roma Day, Ramadan, Eid al Fitr, IDAHOBIT, mental health awareness, cultural diversity, Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month, Carer's Week, Refugee Week, Salford Pride, Learning Disability Week, Windrush Day, Tisha B'Av, Hajj & Eid al Adha, Rastafaranisim (Haile Selassie), Al-Hijra-Islamic New Year and Manchester Pride) to raise the visibility of our diverse workforce and communities.

Whilst we are pleased to have made progress on some key workforce equality, diversity and inclusion issues, we recognise there is more to do to bring about transformational and systemic change

# What do we mean by workforce equality, diversity, inclusion and fairness?

It is important that we are clear about what we mean when we talk about workforce equality, diversity and inclusion as well as an understanding of the legal context in which we operate.

**Equality** in the workplace means equal opportunities and fair treatment for employees and job applicants regardless of any protected characteristics.

**Diversity** is about recognising difference. It's acknowledging the benefit of having a range of perspectives in decision-making and the workforce being representative of our residents.

**Inclusion** is where people's differences are valued and used to enable everyone to thrive at work. An inclusive working environment is one in which everyone feels that they belong without having to conform, that their contribution matters and they are able to perform to their full potential, no matter their background, identity or circumstances

**Fairness** does not mean treating everyone the same. It means treating people in line with their needs to ensure equality.

Therefore, the council strives to be an exemplar employer in Salford by fostering a positive and inclusive workplace environment that recognises, welcomes and supports a diverse workforce that reflects the population that we serve.

We want people to view the council as an equitable, accessible and welcoming organisation where they want to work and progress.

## Legal Context

As a public sector organisation, Salford City Council has a duty to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

This means having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The specific duties of the Equality Act 2010 also require local authorities to prepare and publish one or more equality objectives at least every four years. A central aim of developing such objectives is to enable local authorities to

meet the PSED. These objectives should reflect the most important equality challenges for an organisation and be based on good evidence.

Salford City Council renewed its [Equality Objectives](#) in 2019. They are:

- Build and sustain an inclusive working environment for all
- Better understand, and respond to, the needs of Salford's diverse communities
- Influence others through our procurement and commissioning, regulatory and place making activities to adopt positive practices.
- Foster good relations in all our communities of identity

Therefore, this strategy will play an important role in supporting delivery of the first two of these objectives.

## Our Workforce

**3,433**

people are directly employed in the council. 57% (1,965) of which live in Salford.

**8%**

of the council workforce have disclosed they are from a Black, Asian or Ethnic Minority background (BAME). This compares to 14% across the Salford population. 87% of the workforce have disclosed they are White.

**3%**

of staff have identified as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual

The council's mean gender pay gap is

**11.3%**

This is a fall of 3.2% since reporting began. This is lower than the UK mean gender pay gap of 17.3%.

**197**

employees (6%) declared a disability or long-term health condition.

**56%**

of the workforce identify as Christian and 5% identify as having another faith - the largest being Muslim 2%.

Young people continue to be largely under-represented in the council with only 1.8% of the workforce aged 16-24. This compares to 12% across Salford

## **Our Priorities**

Our vision is to develop an inclusive culture where individuals are respected and treated fairly, where diversity is celebrated, and where everyone regardless of background can reach their full potential.

We know there is lots to do, and this will take time and focus over a number of years.

In line with the Salford Equality Strategy, which sets the overarching strategic framework for partners in the city, we will prioritise the following four areas based on what we know and feedback to date from various stakeholders across the organisation:

- 1. Actively developing our leaders**
- 2. Building confidence through improving education, awareness and training**
- 3. Improving workforce intelligence, insight and representation**
- 4. Targeted interventions to understand and reduce gender and ethnicity pay gaps**

# 1. Actively developing our leaders

We recognise that to build a truly inclusive workplace, leaders need to show visible commitment and take personal responsibility for making it happen. We want our leaders to feel confident to lead and develop diverse and inclusive hybrid teams and therefore need the right training and tools to be able to do this successfully.

Research suggests that what leaders say and do makes up to a 70% difference as to whether an individual reports feeling included at work\*. The more people feel included, the more they engage, speak up, go the extra mile, and collaborate well with others. We therefore expect our leaders to hold themselves and others to account for their behaviours to help foster a positive, diverse and inclusive working environment.

We want leaders who are role models for equality, diversity and inclusion, who act as allies and have the courage to visibly challenge practice, recognise unconscious bias and encourage diversity of experience, ideas and views. We want leaders who understand the equality impact of their decision making and commit to making a difference to improve equality and representation. Our leaders need to be culturally aware and be able to support diverse and hybrid teams to work together successfully.

Therefore, our key areas of focus will be to:

- Better understand what it's really like to work here and learn about the lived experience in order to lead change through creating a safe space to have open and continuing conversations.
- Pilot a new Salford wide reverse mentoring programme to encourage new and innovative ways to address the barriers to race equality. This will be specifically designed to raise awareness of racial discrimination and promote changes in practices, procedures and systems in support of race equality. As this develops we would want to expand this to include other protected characteristics

**Research suggests that what leaders say and do makes up to a 70% difference as to whether an individual reports feeling included at work.\***

- Further embed equality, diversity and inclusion throughout our leadership development offer. This will include all leaders across the council committing to attending Salford's Inclusive Leadership Masterclass which includes unconscious bias training and undertaking Community Impact Assessments to understand equality impact.

- Appoint a senior leadership representative to act as sponsor/champion to each of the council's staff equality groups and attend quarterly staff group meetings to ensure key issues are raised directly at a senior level.

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## 2. Building confidence through improving education, awareness and training

We know that improving equality, diversity and inclusion is the responsibility of every single person across the organisation and we want to build confidence through increased awareness and improved knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity for every employee to better understand each other and Salford's diverse communities.

We also understand that we need to go beyond basic training not only to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 but to strengthen our culture through building confidence, trust, openness and understanding. Through investing further in a range of education, awareness and training programmes to ensure our entire workforce develop a better understanding across a range of equality, diversity and inclusion issues and are able to see how they can contribute to improvements across the council and in the delivery of our services.

We value the voice of the those with lived experience and want to further amplify these voices to improve awareness, understanding and look at how we develop allyship and encourage everyone to call out behaviour that does not fit with our council values. We will also continue our work on increasing cultural awareness, acknowledging and celebrating awareness events and traditional holidays as a way to

encourage conversation and increase cultural literacy, awareness and acceptance.

We need to go back to basics with our equality, diversity and inclusion training offer for the workforce and ensure that this is delivered through a range of different methods to raise awareness of unconscious bias, enhance awareness and understanding of our diverse workforce and communities and promote the value of a diverse and inclusive workplace.

Therefore, our key areas of focus will be to:

- Strengthen our engagement, communication, policy and practice to further promote our zero-tolerance approach across all areas of the organisation to any form of discrimination, bullying, harassment, and victimisation.
- Work with a range of stakeholders across the council to review our resources, policies, practice and training for dealing with hate crime, violence and aggression at work to ensure this is fit for purpose.
- Review our offer around education, awareness and training on equality, diversity and inclusion to ensure staff receive appropriate equality training to challenge unconscious bias and enhance awareness and understanding of Salford's diverse communities and the value of a diverse and inclusive workforce.
- Increase awareness of cultural diversity across the workforce by recognising and celebrating key dates,

traditional holidays festivals and food in a range of different ways. This will be done through the working with our workforce including staff groups, trade union representatives and other stakeholders to develop our Council workforce inclusion calendar.

**We want to build the knowledge and confidence of every member of staff to better understand each other and Salford's diverse communities.**

### **3. Improving workforce intelligence, insight & representation**

Throughout our recent engagement with the local community and voluntary organisations, we understand that more work needs to be done in Salford to increase the diversity of representation in any place where decisions are taken in Salford.

We also heard about the importance of ensuring staff in public sector organisations such as the council need to have a better understanding about the needs of Salford's diverse communities to ensure that they have good insight into the different needs that people and communities may have as a result of their protected characteristics. We want our staff to feel comfortable speaking to and serving a diverse population and see this as an integral part of their role.

We know that we have areas of the workforce which do not represent the diversity of the city. Whilst we acknowledge there are limitations with our data we know that over 14% of the population of Salford are from an ethnic minority background which compares to just 8% of the workforce who disclosed this information. We also know that 22.4% of Salford's working age population have a physical or mental disability which compares to just 6% of our workforce who have disclosed a disability.

Our aim is to have a workforce which is more representative of the Salford population and where our residents can see themselves represented through the services we provide. Improving our workforce information will enable targeted actions to address this under-representation in the short, medium and long-term.

We therefore want to change our approach to workforce equality monitoring, starting with what we know through data but also what people are telling us about working for Salford. This will help us to understand what actions we need to take to address areas of underrepresentation, barriers that people face and be more inclusive. These will become our workforce priorities.

We know that the equality information we have on our workforce is incomplete and therefore one of our urgent priorities is to take action to address this. For some protected characteristics we have up to 30% of records which are either unknown or prefer not to say. Whilst this information will always remain voluntary it is important that we understand the reasons for incomplete information and take appropriate actions to ensure that our workforce understand why we collect information and more importantly what we do and do not do with it.

Whilst we already routinely collate and report equality workforce data we need to review, strengthen and be more visible and transparent about this to make sure it is not only accurate information but provides true insight to our

workforce, our key challenges and informs the workforce strategy, priorities and actions.

Therefore, our key areas of focus will be to:

- Undertake a full review and strengthen our current workforce information including monitoring and reporting of recruitment, selection, induction, development and progression information within the organisation to ensure this is effective, consistent and as comprehensive as possible.
- Work closely with our staff groups and trade union representatives and undertake regular engagement and feedback with the workforce about what it feels like to work for Salford Council. This will provide valuable qualitative insight into key issues so actions to address these can be agreed and progress monitored.
- Take actions to ensure our workforce is more reflective of the local communities we serve such as expanding and enhancing our recruitment outreach to attract more diverse talent (particularly in senior leadership positions) and put in place effective workforce data monitoring to help identify areas for improvement in recruitment and selection practices.
- Take actions to ensure opportunities to develop and progress are available to everyone across the organisation.

**We want our staff to feel comfortable speaking to and serving a diverse population and see this as an integral part of their role.**

## 4.Reducing the gender and ethnicity pay gaps

Organisations with more than 250 employees are legally required each year to publish their gender pay gap information. Gender pay is different to equal pay as it shows the difference between average hourly earnings between men and women in an organisation and is largely affected by the composition of the workforce.

We know the current gender pay gap in the UK stands at 17.3% and the reasons for this gap are complex including economic, cultural, societal and educational factors: The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development suggest that some of the reasons include:

- A lack of flexible working options
- Women being the main providers of unpaid caring responsibilities
- Occupational segregation
- The undervaluing of women's work
- Pay discrimination.

In the council, we are pleased that for the last four years of reporting our gender pay gap this has decreased each year and now stands at 11.3% which is below the national average. Whilst we have made progress, we acknowledge that there is much more to do to reduce this further and are

therefore committed to prioritising actions to address gender equality across service areas.

There is currently no legal requirement to publish details of our ethnicity pay gap, but we are committed to tackling workforce racial equality and have signed up to the Greater Manchester Workforce Race Equality Standard. We therefore want to voluntarily report the Council's ethnicity pay gap and commit to prioritise actions to address racial equality across the Council.

Therefore, our focus will be to:

- Set up a working group with senior oversight to investigate key causes of ethnicity and gender pay disparity across council and identify and lead key actions to reduce the council's pay gaps.
- Explore the option of setting up a women's staff network/group to understand some of the key issues facing women working at the council and strengthen our response as an employer to these issues.
- Review selection practices to focus on raising awareness of unconscious bias and diversity of selection panels in both internal and external recruitment.
- Focus on areas of occupational segregation within the organisation and work with managers to target effective actions to achieve an improved gender balance.

- Continue to promote job vacancies as flexible using #happytotalkflexible and embed flexible working arrangements across the organisation at all levels.
- Improve our information to report on pay gaps across other protected characteristics.

**In the council, we are pleased that for the last four years of reporting our gender pay gap this has decreased each year and now stands at 11.3% which is below the national average**