

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2025-2028



1.Introduction

As a council we are dedicated to promoting equality and making Warrington a fair and inclusive borough. We want to protect, support, and empower our communities and celebrate the diversity of Warrington. To deliver change we recognise that there is an urgent need to support those who face inequality and disadvantage in all its forms, including socio-economic disadvantage. Addressing prejudice and discrimination within our society is a key focus for this strategy.

The impact of the challenges our residents face because of structural inequalities can already be seen across the borough. Economic uncertainty, strengthened by underlying structures of inequality have intensified challenges faced by our communities.

We recognise the significant levels of discrimination and disadvantage faced by care experienced people and have decided to treat “care experience” as if it were a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

This strategy sets out how we will achieve this vision through the delivery of our equality objectives and priorities 2025-2028. These are an integral part of the organisation and link closely with the council's Corporate Strategy and will guide the work we carry out over the next four years. The strategy is in line with our duties and responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty.

2.Our Equality Objectives

Equality Objective - As a provider and commissioner we will provide services that improve outcomes and tackle discrimination throughout the life course.

Priorities

1. Work with our partners and independent service providers to improve educational, employment opportunities and health and wellbeing outcomes for Warrington residents.
2. Improve educational outcomes in early years education and care to give all children the best start in life.
3. Work with schools to improve support for SEND (Special Education Needs and Disability) children and young people by providing an inclusive learning environment in all Warrington schools.
4. Provide support and care through the care leaving service for all care experienced young people¹ until the age of 25, unless they choose to opt out of the service when they reach the age of 21.
5. Implement a workplan and convene a localised steering group to combat violence against women and girls.
6. Work with our partners to improve outcomes for men suffering from mental health conditions.
7. Ensure an adequate supply of affordable and accessible housing for older residents.
8. Support people to remain independent at home through assistive technologies, support services and equipment.
9. Provide support to unpaid carers through the implementation of the Carers Strategy delivery plan 2025 – 2028.

Equality Objective – As a place leader we will work to create a fairer, more equal, integrated Warrington where all people feel welcome and able to fulfil their potential.

Priorities

1. Implement Section 1 of the Equality Act 2010 “Socio-Economic Duty” to deliver better outcomes for people who experience disadvantage.
2. Build a community engagement network so that everyone is able to contribute and influence to ensure that all voices are heard.
3. Identify actions and resources needed to identify inequalities through community engagement, understanding the lived experience of residents from groups who have the most structural inequalities.
4. Celebrate diverse communities by actively promoting specific events and initiatives.
5. Engage and listen to young people through the Youth Council and youth groups and use their feedback to inform service delivery and policies.
6. Improve the physical and digital environment to ensure that all council buildings and services are accessible to all.
7. Improve our approach to the collection and use of equality monitoring data to inform the delivery and commissioning of services and the development of policies and strategies. This priority will include working with our partners to improve equality monitoring processes.
8. Further improve the Equality Impact Assessment process to ensure that equality impacts are considered throughout all decision making processes.

Equality objective - As an employer we will provide an inclusive culture where equality is everyone’s business and employees feel valued and supported.

Priorities

1. Provide leadership through the Strategic Equality Steering Group to ensure that equality, diversity, and inclusion is embedded throughout the council and all staff feel supported.
2. Develop and deliver an equality, diversity, and inclusion training programme to ensure that all councillors and employees have the skills and knowledge to become allies to their colleagues and residents.
3. Improve our equality monitoring information for our workforce and reduce the proportion of unknown equality data.
4. Develop and promote an anti-sexual harassment at work policy and staff training programme to comply with the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023².
5. Develop and promote policy on the councils’ position to being an anti-racist and anti-discriminatory council, which will include procedures on how employees should report and respond to racism and other forms of discriminatory abuse and harassment in the workplace.
6. Continue to provide support to pre-menopausal and menopausal women.
7. Continue to deliver health and wellbeing activities to support male mental health.
8. Provide support for neurodivergent staff, training for managers and arrange neurodivergent awareness raising initiatives.



How will we deliver these objectives and priorities?

Over the next four years we will deliver our objectives and priorities through projects, policies, and strategies. Many of these projects will involve working with our partners, residents, and the wider community. A detailed action plan will be developed to identify and implement actions to deliver our objectives.

The council's Strategic Equality Group is responsible for the delivery of the objectives and priorities. Regular progress reports will be forwarded to the council's Cabinet and Organisational Improvement and Development Policy Committee. In addition, many of the projects will be monitored through the council's performance management framework.

¹ Experience of the Care System as a child or young person – This refers to people who have spent time living with foster carers under local authority care, in residential care (e.g., a children's home) or in kinship care with relatives or friends as a child or young person. A care leaver is a young person aged 16-25 years old who has been 'looked after' at some point since they were 14 years old, were in care on or after their 16th birthday.

² This amendment to the Equality Act requires employers to take 'reasonable steps' to prevent sexual harassment at work.