



Report To:	Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date:	17 th July 2025
Subject:	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy
Purpose:	To seek views on the Partnership Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy.
Key Decision:	No
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Anne Dorrian, Leader of the Council
Report Of:	James Gilbert, Assistant Director - Corporate
Report Author:	Rachel Robinson, Group Manager – Organisational Development
Ward(s) Affected:	n/a
Exempt Report:	No

Summary

This report brings forward the revised Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy (Appendix A) for the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership (SELCP) for 2025-2028 following feedback from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The strategy, developed following consultation and as a key recommendation from the Local Government Association Peer Challenge process, aims to further develop service provision to ensure services are accessible to all. It includes a high-level action plan (Appendix B) to implement the strategy effectively.

Recommendations

To review and provide views on the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan at Appendices A and B.

Reasons for Recommendations

- To ensure Boston Borough Council furthers the development of service provision to ensure services are accessible to all and is committed to promoting inclusion within its workforce and the communities it serves.
- To comply with legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- To enhance the reputation of Boston Borough Council as an inclusive and progressive Council.

Other Options Considered

Do nothing: This option was rejected as it would not result in a plan to enhance equality, diversity and inclusion within the Council, as identified through the Peer Challenge process.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Equality Act 2010 provides the legal framework for this strategy. It protects people from discrimination in the workplace and wider society and places a duty on public bodies to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people.
- 1.2 Boston Borough Council recognises the importance of creating an inclusive environment for both employees and the community. EDI, when implemented correctly, can significantly improve service provision to the needs of local communities.
- 1.3 The proposed EDI Strategy has been developed following extensive consultation with stakeholders, including workforce, councillors, residents and partners such as Lincs Digital, Citizens Advice and Shine Lincolnshire.
- 1.4 Following the committee's previous review of the EDI Strategy, the document has been revised and is now returning for further consideration. The following updates in the table below have been made in direct response to the committee's recommendation. These updates aim to strengthen the strategy's clarity, inclusivity, and data integrity, in line with the committee's valuable feedback.

Recommendation/Feedback	Action
Clearer and more accessible language	The strategy has been reviewed by the Group Manager – Communications and Engagement, with edits made throughout to adopt a plain English approach. This ensures the document is more accessible and easier to understand for a wider audience.

Broadened Scope of Inclusion	The strategy now better reflects local socio-economic realities, including economic hardship and political disengagement. These additions are particularly highlighted in the Boston section and under the Community priorities ensuring a more inclusive and locally relevant approach.
Accuracy and consistency of demographic data	The demographic data has been reviewed and confirmed as accurate based on the latest Census data. To avoid potential misinterpretation, the term 'ethnically' has been removed from the relevant table commentary, as the data pertains to race rather than ethnicity or national identity.

2. Report

2.1 The strategy is attached at Appendix A and the High-Level Action Plan at Appendix B.

2.2 The EDI Strategy sets out the Council's commitment to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion across all areas of its operation.

2.3 Key Objectives:

- Understand the needs of our communities and bring local people together.
- Create a diverse and inclusive leadership team and embed inclusion in decision-making.
- Ensure council services meet the diverse needs of residents and make it easy for local residents to access services.
- Be an inclusive and fair employer with a diverse workforce at all levels.

2.4 High-Level Action Plan:

- Training and Development: Implement training within the workforce so the organisation as a whole can support the delivery of objectives.
- Policy Review: Conduct a comprehensive review of existing policies to ensure they align with EDI principles.
- Community Engagement: Develop initiatives to engage with diverse community groups.
- Monitoring and Evaluating: Establish metrics to measure progress and impact.

2.5 Expertise is required internally to deliver the strategy through the appointment of a 2-year fixed term officer shared post. This will be met by in-year reserves to provide expertise and delivery of the high level action plan.

3. Conclusion

3.1. The adoption of the EDI Strategy and the high-level action plan will position the Council as a leader in promoting equality, diversity and inclusion and ultimately improve service provision to the local community. The recommendations are designed to ensure effective implementation and continuous improvement.

Implications

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

Positive impact by fostering an inclusive environment.

Corporate Priorities

Supports corporate priorities related to community engagement and workforce development.

Staffing

Requires commitment from all staff; Organisational Development to lead training initiatives.

Workforce Capacity Implications

The post identified within the report is required in order for the Council to deliver the Strategy and associated Action Plan.

Constitutional and Legal Implications

Complies with the Equality Act 2010.

Data Protection

No specific implications

Financial

Budget allocation required for the appointment of a part time, 2 year fixed term shared officer role to provide expert advice to services and the implementation of the action plan.

Risk Management

Mitigates risks associated with non-compliance with equality legislation.

Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales

Consultation undertaken with staff, unions and community groups.

Reputation

Enhances the Council's reputation as an inclusive employer and service provider.

Contracts

No specific implications.

Crime and Disorder

No specific implications

Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding

Positive impact on equality and diversity; no safeguarding issues.

Health and Wellbeing

Promotes a positive and inclusive environment.

Climate Change and Environment Impact Assessment

Not Undertaken.

Acronyms

EDI; Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

SELCP: South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

Appendices

Appendix A

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy Document

Appendix B

High-level Action Plan

Background Papers

No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.

Chronological History of this Report

A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body.

Report Approval

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