



Corporate Overview Group

Tuesday, 17 June 2025

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Scheme update and Diversity Annual Report 2024 to 2025

Report of the Chief Executive

1. Summary

- 1.1. Following the adoption of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Scheme in May 2021, it was decided that a report would be brought back to the Corporate Overview Group on work carried out on delivery of the action plan in place to support that Scheme every 12 months. This report provides that update, it was considered beneficial to combine this with the annual diversity report update which is also presented to Corporate Overview Group.
- 1.2. The information in the report compares the demographic information for the Borough, using the 2021 census information, with that of our workforce with this information being taken from the HR /Payroll system.
- 1.3. The report also provides the update on the delivery of the EDI Scheme action plan that has been in place since its agreement in May 2021. This will be supported by a presentation to be delivered to the Group providing further details on some of the activity that has taken place and is planned.

2. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Corporate Overview Group:

- a) consider and endorse the information provided for the diversity annual report
- b) review the action taken so far as a part of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Scheme action plan and make suggestions for future action or areas of focus.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

The public sector equality duty is a requirement on public authorities to consider how their policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act. Although there is no explicit legal duty for Public Sector bodies to collect and use equality data, authorities must understand the impact of their policies and practices on people with protected characteristics. Therefore, collecting, analysing and monitoring information is an important way to develop this understanding.

4. Supporting Evidence

Ethnicity

- 4.1 A breakdown of the ethnicity of the Borough in comparison with the East Midlands and nationally is shown at Appendix A. As this is census data it is the same data that was presented to Corporate Overview Group in June 2024.
- 4.2 The Borough Council's workforce information shown at Appendix B shows that we currently broadly reflect the demographic of the Borough with 80.9% of RBC employees in the white British or white other ethnic group which is slightly lower than for the residents of the Borough (white 89%). The figure for the Borough is slightly higher than that for the East Midlands (88%).
- 4.3 The 80.9% of staff in the white British or white other is at its lowest level compared to previous years down from 94% in 2020/21.

Age Profile

- 4.4 The age profile of Rushcliffe can be found at appendix A2 and it indicates that the Borough has a larger proportion of residents who are over 60 years of age (28%) than the East Midlands (25.5%) and national average (24%).
- 4.5 There are fewer residents aged between 15 and 24 in Rushcliffe (10%) than the East Midlands (12%) and England (11.7%). The age ranges reported from the census in 2011 vary from those for 2021 so it is difficult to make a direct comparison. However, at the report to Corporate Overview Group in 2022 (which included data from 2011 census) the difference between Rushcliffe, East Midlands and England remained the same with more over 60's and less between 15 and 24.
- 4.6 The age profile of the organisation (appendix B) shows that 58% of the workforce are aged over 45. The authority continues to support employees who wish to continue working, keeping knowledge within the organisation as well as working towards ensuring effective succession planning by improving the age diversity of the workforce.

Disability

- 4.7 Data from the 2021 Census shows that 7,145 people (6% of the population) in Rushcliffe have a long-term health problem or disability which limits their daily activities a lot. A further 11,929 (10%) are limited a little. These are lower than the percentages for the East Midlands which are 12.9% (a lot), and 18% (a little) see appendix A3.
- 4.8 The number of employees who declare they have a disability is slightly higher than the previous year at 7% (6% in 2023/24), the number has been increasing gradually over the last few years as the table at appendix B shows. As an authority, the Council continues to support employees who are either disabled when they join the authority or become disabled during their employment. This is through the Council's policies, and occupational and welfare services.

- 4.9 The Council is a Disability Confident Employer and reached the required criteria to be recredited this year enabling the Council to use the Disability Confident Employer badge until July 2026.

Gender and sex

- 4.10 The data set for identity of sex for the Borough area shows there are slightly more males than females currently residing in the Borough (Appendix A4). The split at the Council shows fewer female employees than males (40% compared to 60%) which is, in some part, due to the Council's manual workforce containing roles that are traditionally male dominated. The Council has worked to encourage female employees into this environment and will continue to promote fair recruitment practices to encourage a diverse workforce.
- 4.11 For the 2021 census, the Government also included a question about gender identity. This is included at Appendix A4. This data is not currently collected for Council employees.
- 4.12 Gender pay reporting legislation requires employers with 250 or more employees to publish statutory calculations every year showing how large the pay gap is between their male and female employees (based on an average). The figures up to end of March 2024 are shown at Appendix C (data for the previous year, up to March 2025, will not be available until July).
- 4.13 The figures are taken as a snapshot of employees in post on 31 March. Within the last financial year employee changes have resulted in a positive impact on the results most noticeably a reduction from the original difference in 2017 of 8.9% between the mean £per hour of male and female pay to now the female mean being higher than the male mean (8.87%). This is the third consecutive year when the female mean is higher than the male. Some factors that will contribute to this are the number of females at the Council in higher paid roles as well as moving Streetwise back in house (2022) where most employees are men in lower paid manual roles.

Applicants

- 4.14 As well as monitoring information for current employees, information is also recorded on the individuals who apply for jobs at the Council. This enables the Council to see if applications are being received from a diverse range of applicants.
- 4.15 This information is included at Appendix D and it shows that in 2024/25 there were 488 applicants for jobs at the Council compared to 674 in 2023/24. The number of applicants is still higher than previous years though when numbers received ranged from 211 to 382. It is thought that this is possibly due to a few factors:
- the number of people in the UK looking for work has risen since Covid
 - The Council advertised a few roles that received a large number of applications.

It is anticipated that LGR will have an impact on resignations from staff who make a decision to leave local authorities to join private industry due to uncertainties and concern over job security. However we may also see long serving staff remain in employment longer due to the potential for redundancy.

- 4.16 The data shows that, of those that choose to declare, the majority of applicants to the Council are white British or other white (64.6%). Most are heterosexual (82%). There is a relatively even split between male and female applicants (46.1% male and 45.1% female) and the majority (91.6%) are not disabled. Finally, the majority are aged between 25 and 34 (32.8%). This is lower than the current employee age range where the majority are in the 45 to 54 age range.

Councillors

- 4.17 As requested at Corporate Overview Group in 2022, information about Councillors is now included at Appendix E. This is, of course, the same as the information presented to Corporate Overview Group in June 2023.
- 4.18 This shows that the majority of Councillors are male (66%) and this has remained the same since the election in May 2023. 7% of Councillors have reported that they have a disability, again this is the same as in the previous year. The majority of Councillors are aged 65+ (37%) and again this is consistent with the previous year.
- 4.19 Ethnicity information is not currently recorded for Councillors and therefore this information is not available for sharing. Following discussions at the last Corporate Overview Group meeting an action has been added to the EDI action plan to record ethnicity information following future elections.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Scheme Action Plan

- 4.20 The EDI Scheme which was adopted in May 2021 has 4 high level aims:
- We want Rushcliffe to be a welcoming place for everyone
 - We want our services to be easy to access for all
 - We will treat people fairly and aim to meet individual needs
 - We aim to make Rushcliffe a place where everyone can achieve their potential.
- 4.21 To support the delivery of these aims, the Council identified some commitments which were:
- Understanding our community
 - Reflecting the diversity of our community
 - Working in partnership to achieve impact
 - Supporting our workforce.
- 4.22 The EDI Scheme is due to be reviewed in 2025/26 and the EDI Steering Group will undertake this work. Any changes to the Scheme will be reported to Corporate Overview Group as a part of the update in 2026.

EDI Maturity Assessment

- 4.23 Internal audit (BDO) were asked to carry out an EDI Maturity Assessment in 2024/25. The purpose of this is to help ensure an effective approach to EDI becomes embedded across the Council by highlighting areas where processes could be improved. This was an advisory piece of work assessing the Council's current position against the BDO EDI matrix. The following elements were assessed:

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| Tone from the Top | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mission, Vision, Values and Strategy• The Board and Senior Management• Roles and Responsibilities• EDI Risk Management |
| Governance, Compliance and Strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• EDI Strategy• Operational Planning• Compliance• Pay Gap Analysis• Third parties |
| Structure | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Committees, Networks and Forums• Resources |
| Policies, Procedures, Training and Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policies and Procedures• Training and Development |
| Measurement, Accountability and Continuous Improvement | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Measurement• Accountability• Continuous Improvement |

- 4.24 It is important to note that the Council does not have a dedicated resource to deliver EDI work. The Steering Group includes officers from across the Council who work to ensure that EDI is embedded and, where possible, additional activity is undertaken. In addition, the Strategic HR Manager is involved in East Midlands Councils EDI Network which brings together colleagues from local authorities to share best practice and hear updates on any changes to legislation.

- 4.25 The EDI Maturity Assessment identified some areas of best practice including:
- The Council has stated EDI as one of its core values through the 2021-25 Equality Scheme.
 - The Council demonstrates commitment through structured EDI governance with the EDI Steering Group having cross-departmental representation from key service areas and provides systematic monitoring of action plan progress and its commitment to transparency is evidenced through regular reporting to the Corporate Overview Group.
 - The Council has established a robust Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process with a two-stage approach that ensures thorough evaluation of policy impacts and EDI considerations are embedded in policy and decision-making.
 - New starters receive scheduled training covering essential EDI topics within their first two months. Additionally, the Council has proactively identified emerging training needs such as neurodiversity awareness for managers.

- 4.26 The Assessment also identified a number of recommendations, these are being reviewed and, where appropriate, implemented over the coming year. This includes:
- Updating the action plan to better identify a responsible officer and timescale.
 - The planned refresh of the Council's Corporate Strategy include EDI and establish a clearer connection between the Corporate Strategy and the EDI Scheme and supporting action plan.
 - Refresh of EDI training with clear timescales for completion, review and refresher cycle (2 years) to be implemented. This will ensure managers are aware of staff that have not completed required training.
 - During the refresh of the EDI scheme in 2025/26 consider updating it to outline clear responsibilities' defining specific EDI duties and accountabilities.
 - Considering designating a senior executive team member as EDI sponsor /Champion, this will be considered however the senior responsible officer is a Head of Service and Councillor Jonathan Wheeler is the Portfolio Holder for EDI. In addition updates are reported to EMT and on to Corporate Overview Group providing the opportunity for Councillor oversight and scrutiny.

Action plan

- 4.27 The updated action plan can be found at Appendix F, this now has clearer timescales and identified lead officers. It is reviewed and updated quarterly by the Steering Group. What follows is an update on work completed so far and some detail on plans for the coming months. It is important to note that this is ongoing work and so the following should be read as a snapshot in time that will be constantly updated. This is the purpose of having the higher-level scheme with supporting action plan to help ensure that this is a living document that is owned across all areas of the Council. There is always more work to be done and officers would welcome the ideas of the Scrutiny Group to feed into future plans.
- 4.28 The Corporate Overview Group has received updates previously, most recently in June 2024. The following paragraphs in the report focus on some of the actions included in the plan to provide a little more detail.
- 4.29 The residents survey in October 2024 asked local residents if they felt that they belonged to their local area. The % figure of those that felt they do belong remains high but is slightly lower than in previous years:
- 76% 2024
 - 79% 2021
 - 82% 2018

This is something that requires further investigation to try and understand the reason for this reduction. This will be picked up through the Communication and Engagement Strategy and the ambition to engage more with our local communities.

- 4.30 The new 2-stage Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process is now embedded with updated e learning training circulated to all staff. The Strategic HR Manager and Head of Economic Growth and Property will provide a

further update to a future Leadership Forum. The EIA has been carried out for a number of policies and activities including:

- Communication and Engagement Strategy
- UKSPF and REPF programme
- Economic Development Strategy
- Renewal of Public Space Protection Order (dog control)
- Improvements to play areas in West Bridgford

- 4.31 The Councils Waste and Recycling and Communications Teams worked together to produce a leaflet on recycling in alternative languages. This was distributed to households in the new developments at Bingham and Edwalton.
- 4.32 Following a review of EDI training additional training has been identified for employees which is now being rolled out including:
- EDI awareness – online and for all staff
 - EIA training to support embedding the new process
- 4.33 E-learning on EDI is also available for Councillors, 24 Councillors have completed this training.
- 4.34 The Council have now been re-accredited for White Ribbon and have a three year action plan in place that the White Ribbon Steering Group are delivering on.
- 4.35 As reported last year the Council used some of its UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF) to support projects that are designed to support our communities. These have delivered some outputs and outcomes for our community including:
- Public realm improvements on Central Avenue to remove pinch points to improve accessibility as well as enhancing the appearance of the area to encourage dwell time.
 - 2000 people attended the second Lunar New Year event on 1 February at Bingham Arena.
 - Green Doctor delivered by Groundwork to support residents to identify ways to improve energy efficiency and so reduce bills supported 164 households in the Borough, saving an estimated 144 tonnes of Co2
 - 55 local residents were supported by the Transform Your Future programme delivered by Nottinghamshire Futures. This is an employment and skills support programme for people in the Borough who are currently not in work, education or training and delivery is continuing into 2025/26.
 - 3 English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) training courses were delivered each consisting of 6 sessions for a total of 29 people.
- 4.36 Rushcliffe is working together to become a Dementia Friendly Community. The Council is working with partners, stakeholders and community and voluntary organisations to improve the support available to people living with dementia and their carers:

- Dementia Friends and Carer Awareness Training (provided Council employees) is widely promoted across the borough to local businesses, community and voluntary organisations and the public, plus sessions are promoted in the Rushcliffe Big Green Book to enable our community to be more inclusive.
- The Borough Council continues to champion dementia-friendly initiatives through funding, signposting, and raising awareness. The Rushcliffe Business Partnership will be supporting RDAN (Rushcliffe Dementia Action Network), now a registered charity, by donating proceeds from its networking events to help sustain and expand their work across the borough.
- The Council's flagship publication includes a dedicated page to the Dementia Friendly project to raise awareness and highlight advice and support for people affected by dementia. The Council have also highlighted dementia and carer friendly themes at several community events, as well as facilitating the annual Dementia and Carers Roadshow in April which brings together organisations and services from across Rushcliffe.
- Following the Dementia Friendly walkthroughs new signage has been installed at Bingham Arena and East Leake Leisure Centre, with accessibility and inclusivity also taken into account during the redevelopment of Cotgrave and Keyworth Leisure Centres.

4.37 The Council was awarded Carer Friendly Accreditation in August 2024 in recognition of its proactive approach and strong commitment to supporting unpaid carers within the organisation. Key actions included delivering carer awareness training to the senior leadership team, reviewing and updating policies to embed carer support, introducing a Carer's Passport, recruiting and training four Carer Champions and encouraging peer-to-peer support across the workforce.

4.38 The Rushcliffe Arena light-up plan helps raise awareness of national campaigns, aligning with our Equality and Quality Framework. This includes Holocaust Memorial Day, Pride Month and World Suicide Prevention Day.

4.39 The Borough Council coordinates a joint membership to the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower campaign for partners within the Primary Care Network (PCN). This recognised initiative offers a discreet way for individuals with non-visible disabilities to indicate that they may need additional support, understanding or time in public settings. The joint membership ensures all partners have access to relevant resources and training.

5. Risks and Uncertainties

Failure to collect and use equality data means the Council runs the risk of not understanding the impact of its policies and practices on people with protected characteristics.

6. Implications

6.1. Financial Implications

The majority of activity included in the action plan is contained within existing budgets. However, some items require external funding or support including Lunar New Year (UKSPF) and Changing Places Toilets. For those to be delivered in future years funding will need to be identified including sponsorship.

6.2. Legal Implications

This report supports the Council's compliance with the Equalities Act 2010.

6.3. Equalities Implications

This report contains information regarding the Council's monitoring of Equality objectives under the Public Sector Duty, as well as complying with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

6.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

Section 17 requires local authorities to consider the community safety implications of all their activities. The Council's Equality Scheme shows a commitment to monitor the demographic information of the Borough, encouraging knowledge of the people we serve of Councillors and employees and encouraging cohesiveness.

6.5. Biodiversity Net Gain Implications

There are no direct Biodiversity Net Gain implications arising from this report.

7. Link to Corporate Priorities

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| The Environment | There are no links to this priority from this report. |
| Quality of Life | <p>The public sector equality duty is a duty on public authorities to consider and think about how their policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act. This report sets out relevant information about the Borough, Council staff and the work done over the last year.</p> <p>By ensuring we monitor this information and acting accordingly we are encouraging an improved knowledge of the people we serve, of Councillors and employees, and encouraging cohesiveness.</p> |
| Efficient Services | There are no links to this priority from this report. |
| Sustainable Growth | There are no links to this priority from this report. |

8. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Corporate Overview Group

- a) consider and endorse the report information provided for the diversity annual report
- b) review the action taken so far as a part of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Scheme action plan and make suggestions for future action or areas of focus.

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| For more information contact: | Catherine Evans Service Manager Economic Growth and Property 0115 914 8552 cevens@rushcliffe.gov.uk |
| Background papers Available for Inspection: | Rushcliffe Borough Councils Equality Scheme 2021 to 2025 |
| List of appendices (if any): | Appendix A Demographic Information Appendix B Rushcliffe Borough Council Workforce Equality Information. Appendix C Gender Pay gap information Appendix D Applicants' information Appendix E Councillors' information Appendix F EDI Action Plan |