

Equalities Scheme 2021-2025

The Equalities Scheme for 2021-25 builds on the previous Scheme to reflect the changes in society to ensure it is relevant to all and to broaden its focus to take account of inclusion, in addition to objectives relating to equality and diversity.

Inclusion is fundamentally about individual experience and allowing everyone to access services and feel part of the Borough. Inclusion gives diversity impact and drive towards a place where all residents, elected members and all Council employees are empowered to thrive - inclusion is relevant for everyone.

Aims of the Scheme

The aims of the Scheme are:

- 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

Commitments & Indicators under the Scheme

As part of the Scheme, the Council will be committed to:

1. Understand our community

Indicators in support of this are:

- Gather and analyse diversity data to understand where action is needed to ensure inclusivity for all
- Effective community engagement
- Participation in public life
- Commissioning and procuring services

2. Reflect the diversity of our community

Take actions to achieve appropriate and inclusive representation in terms of our workforce, task and finish groups and service delivery/take-up.

- Leadership
- Assessing equality impact in policy and decision taking
- Equality objectives and annual reporting
- Inclusive strategies and policies

3. Work in partnership to achieve impact

Develop and share policies and resources across the organisation and with key partners to improve representation and inclusivity of diverse groups to maximise impact.

- Priorities and working in partnership
- Collecting and sharing information

4. Develop, implement and monitor annual action plans

Equality, diversity and inclusion need to be embedded within the fabric of the organisation rather than being a separate add-on. Each year, with input from representative groups, priorities and action plans will be established to be built into service plans.

- Performance monitoring and scrutiny
- Integrating equality objectives into service planning

Identifying Priorities for Action Plans

The Scheme is brought to life through annual action plans. These will be developed based on issues and priorities identified through consultation with our communities to ensure they are relevant. The actions will be implemented as part of service plans so that equality, diversity and inclusion are integral to the organisation and not add-ons.

The 2021 Census results will provide key insights into the residents of Rushcliffe and will serve as a significant review point in terms of the development of actions and plans in light of this new information. Below are examples of two Action Plans already identified.

Supporting the Equality Scheme as an Employer

Equality, diversity and inclusion is recognised as an organisational priority and is reflected within our People Strategy, which has a dedicated strategic theme: **Being Inclusive & Building Diversity**.

Outline actions that fall within this theme are:

- Continue monitoring and understanding reasons and actions to address under-representation and pay gaps.
- Ensure equality, diversity and inclusion considerations as part of policy development.
- Through development and communication, increase awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion issues to understand barriers and how these could be addressed.
- Develop and implement a new equality action plan.
- Continue to fully engage with national schemes and initiatives to support under-represented groups into work.

Fulfilling our Public Sector Duty and Requirements within the Legal Framework

The Scheme incorporates and builds on our legal requirements as provided within the Equality Act 2010 to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
- Ensure people are treated with equality in mind

- Create and develop good relations with our communities and within our workforce

We will continue to:

- monitor and report the diversity of our workforce, and equality indicators such as the gender pay gap
- undertake consultation
- undertake equality impact assessments during the development of services and policies and identify how impacts can be avoided, reduced or mitigated.