

SAFE WELL PROSPEROUS CONNECTED

# Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategic Framework

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## 1. Our Commitment as Place Leader, Community Enabler and Employer

North Lincolnshire Council is committed to our values of equality of opportunity, integrity, self-responsibility, and excellence and are united in promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion.

The Council Plan sets out our intention to lead by example and promote positive behaviours. Our council priorities ensure that people remain at the heart of everything we do and working with our partners, we aim to maximise our impact by enabling and encouraging our residents, communities and businesses to achieve their full potential and to be the best place for residents.

We recognise that different forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other. We acknowledge and work inclusively addressing impacts relating to intersectional diversity. We are determined to ensure anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory practice in all we do. We will listen to diverse lived experiences and are ready to keep learning, with accountability to those who experience oppression, disadvantage, or discrimination because of their identity/ies, diversity factors such as age, class, disability, ethnicity, race, faith/religion, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation or other diversity factor or combination of intersectional diversity.

To support our approach, our equity, diversity and inclusion commitment is ambitious and inclusive to enable, enhance and continuously improve our current position. It is aligned to the public sector equality duty (Equality Act 2010) which requires the Council to demonstrate, in relation to the nine protected characteristics, how we are:

### **(i) Eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment**

#### **(ii) Advancing equality of opportunity by:**

- a. Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by a person who share a relevant protected characteristic (that are connected to that characteristic).
- b. Taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
- c. Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

#### **(iii) Fostering good relations between different groups**

We also have a specific duty to publish and review equality objectives and with due regard, undertake appropriate equality analysis. Our equality objectives and priority areas for action are identified in this strategic framework. This is also informed by our Towards Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Roadmap (Appendix 1) which sets out our wider approach and direction towards equity, diversity and inclusion for North Lincolnshire Council.

## 2. Our role and focus as Place Leader and Community Enabler

**Where we want to be:** **Keeping people safe and well** – to achieve a longer and better quality of life for our residents.

**Enabling resilient and flourishing communities** – to develop greater resilience and community spirit and enable people to identify and meet their ambitions.

**Enabling economic growth and renewal** – to ensure there are highly skilled jobs and opportunities for a highly skilled workforce and the local economy supports efforts to reduce carbon emissions.

**Providing value for money for local taxpayers** – to ensure high quality services are provided for residents and the council is well-led.

<https://www.northlincs.gov.uk/your-council/council-plan/>

**Equality Objective 1:** **Enabling the council to meet its priorities and achieve outcomes in an equitable and inclusive way.**

We recognise equity, diversity and inclusion as being essential to our approach as Place leader and Community Enabler. We understand that we need to mitigate against impact for our most vulnerable residents and under-represented communities and, that requires innovative solutions best enabled with insight from our diverse customers, residents and employees so that we can meet our council priorities.

Delivering on our equality commitment as Place Leader and Community Enabler, we recognise the need to build capacity and resilience through organisational allyship, which is underpinned by the following principles:

- Recognising the need to educate and inform about the impact of barriers: unconscious, intersectional distance and other bias; the manifestation of diversity related triggers, microaggression and discrimination and the additional emotional labour our employees and residents can carry because of a particular characteristic and, its impact, when experienced.
- Working to ensure our services are inclusive and demonstrate cultural intelligence. By doing this we seek to meet the cultural needs of all our diverse customers in service design, procurement, delivery, and review.
- Promoting the importance of visibility and representation and sense of belonging in all places and activity including when we are working with place and other partners.

We acknowledge that different communities can experience North Lincolnshire differently due to their diversity and different lived experiences. Enabling allyship creates the space for communities commonly marginalised, under-represented and/or disempowered to have their voices heard and be visible and represented.

### 3. Our role and focus as employer: a well led council enabling Be Yourself at Work

**Where we want to be:** All employees are enabled to have pride, purpose and sense of belonging.

**Equality Objective 2:** All employees feel safe and are enabled to Be Yourself at Work.

**Equality Objective 3:** Our workforce better reflects the diversity of North Lincolnshire's residents.

In December 2022, the council introduced a new Diversity, Equality and Inclusion policy to embrace the council's value of Equality of Opportunity and support the enablement of a culture where all employees feel valued and enjoy a sense of belonging.

Our Ally to All Framework (Appendix 2) is a key driver in enabling employees to have pride, purpose and a sense of belonging so that they feel safe to Be Yourself at Work (BYAW). The council is committed to fostering a culture of allyship where employees and applicants from our diverse communities in North Lincolnshire can trust they are safe to Be themselves at Work and enabled to flourish in the organisation. This is a key requirement to deliver on our equality objectives and council priorities. Allyship is about understanding the imbalance in opportunity and working to correct it. Being an ally requires a proactive behaviour 'taking on the struggle [of an employee marginalised because of their diversity / diversity intersection] as if it were your own'.

Underpinning all work relating to BYAW and allyship are the following principles:

- All-inclusive in approach no hierarchy of need – no staff network is favoured over another in terms of funding, sponsorship or action. Positive action may be taken to mitigate specific barriers experienced relevant to a particular group.
- Barriers faced by more than one (minority) group are addressed together. There is transferable learning from understanding different and intersecting lived experiences.
- Intersectional diversity is valued and identified issues; impact assessed with equality analysis.

Engaging with employees through our BYAW Staff Networks and conversations, we have gained insight into the different experiences of employees and their experiences both working for the council, as customers and as residents of North Lincolnshire. Through our engagement activity we have reaffirmed that our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion is important to our employees and residents with minority lived experiences, who may be underrepresented in engagement and decision-making. We also recognise that impact can be exacerbated by intersectional diversity.

#### 4. Our equality objectives and priorities:

##### **Equality Objective 1: Enabling the council to meet its priorities and achieve outcomes in an equitable and inclusive way.**

###### **Priority 1: Self-assessment against LGA Equality Framework.**

The council continues to utilise external benchmarking tools/frameworks to inform our work and commitment around equality, diversity and inclusion. One of our key priorities is to undertake a full and detailed self-assessment against the LGA Equality Framework to assess progress against our three equality objectives.

###### **Priority 2: Review data collection and analysis.**

Work is in the planning to review collection, use and sharing of equalities data relating to protected characteristics and socio-economic factors. The council wants to ensure this information is available, shared and connections made to impact for diverse resident and customer experiences as well as health and wider outcomes. Our longer-term goal is to work with partners to develop enhanced ways of data analysis using intersection as a factor for measuring impact, outcome and where targeted positive action may be required in service commission, design and delivery to improve access to services and outcomes for under-represented communities where appropriate.

###### **Priority 3: Revisit our approach to equality analysis.**

Work has started to revisit our approach to equality analysis, with a small pilot of a new Equality Analysis template taking place within HR during 2022/23. Further development and consultation are planned with a view to rolling out the new approach in 2023/24.

The new approach will seek to build upon existing practice with more detailed consideration to intersectional impact and evidence to ensure robust monitoring and reporting on equality impact analysis through formal decision-making processes.

###### **Priority 4: Public Engagement**

Public engagement is defined as ‘developing and sustaining a working relationship between one or more public body and one or more community group, to help them both to understand and act on the needs or issues that the community experiences.’ The council’s Public Engagement Framework has four public engagement priorities:

- Enhancing transparency.
- Creating positive and authentic interaction.
- Enabling vulnerable people to have influence.
- Helping people and communities to help themselves.

We already engage with our residents, both with individuals and communities and there is much good practice in what we do and how we do it. However, we recognise that to achieve the council’s priorities, we must become more outward-looking and highly engaged. We are also

aware of the opportunities for positive action to enable equality of opportunity for our under-represented communities to participate in public life including through engagement activities.

**Equality Objective 2: All employees feel safe and are enabled to Be Yourself at Work.**

**Equality Objective 3: Our workforce better reflects the diversity of North Lincolnshire's residents.**

**Priority 5: Promote zero tolerance on bullying and harassment.**

**Priority 6: Keep employees safe from disrespect and all kinds of discrimination/hate incidents perpetuated by customers.**

We want all council employees to have pride, purpose, and sense of belonging. To do this, employees need to feel safe to be themselves at work. Our Ally to All Framework (Appendix 2) is built around keeping the workforce safe and well. Our intention is that wellbeing is at the heart of our culture; our values and behaviours are modelled at every level in the organisation, and we all notice behaviour not conducive with our culture and confidently challenge it.

We want work to be a psychologically safe place for our employees. Psychological safety in a work context can be described as *'a shared belief held by members of a team that others on the team will not embarrass, reject or punish you for speaking up [and] ...A psychological safe workplace begins with a feeling of belonging'* (Center for Creative Leadership, 2023).

Reaffirmed by our BYAW focus and engagement, we recognise that our employees have different experiences at work based on their diversity/diversity intersection. We recognise that more work is required to understand the manifestation of micro aggression, emotional labour and bias on different employees based on lived experiences and the impact that this has. The insight we have from the BYAW Staff Networks so far has informed our equality objective priority and action areas.

We are focused on achieving our objectives through our BYAW focus and Ally to All Framework and programme. It requires inclusive leadership and proactive allies at senior leadership levels. It also includes proactive allyship behaviours and practices which we will achieve through organisational allyship and other mechanisms including the BYAW Engagement Model we have put into place to make the workplace a (psychologically) safe place for all.

**Priority 7: Supporting and developing the BYAW Engagement Model including BYAW Staff Networks**

Our staff networks and conversations offer a safe and confidential space for employees sharing a lived experience to meet, share their experiences and provide peer support to one another. The networks are lived experience led and typically meet on a six-weekly basis. Each Network has a work plan and are involved in the development of the Ally to All Programme.

We recognise that networks develop differently, and trust is a key element and takes time to achieve. We have implemented the Be Yourself at Work Staff Networks' SUCCESS model to support their ongoing development and sponsorship (see Appendix 3).

The BYAW Engagement Model and feedback from staff networks will be incorporated into the work of the council's Staff Engagement transformation workstream, with staff network representatives actively involved and consulted with on wider discussions and developments around employee engagement across the council.

**Priority 8: Ally to All Programme**

The development of our Ally to All programme will provide the resources and mechanisms to enable employees to be proactive, confident and rewarded through allyship. It is aimed at making our existing employees confident and active allies at all levels of the organisation. This will enable our workforce to engage in lifted conversations around equity, diversity and inclusion resulting in recognising, understanding and meeting the needs of our diverse customers, residents, businesses and visitors. Appendix 2 provides more detail on the planned programme.

**Priority 9: Enabling a more representatively diverse organisation.**

Attracting more diverse candidates in recruitment and through promotion is a priority to enable the council to be more representative and innovatively responsive to the needs of our North Lincolnshire population.

A focus on the diversity of our workforce is incorporated into the work of the council's Rightsizing the Workforce transformation workstream to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion are valued across the organisation with an emphasis on allyship.

We recognise that the visibility of diversity celebrations and public engagement also supports the council as employer to attract a diverse workforce with understanding to influence and meet diverse community, resident, and customer needs.

**5. Monitoring and Review**

This framework and accompanying action plan will be subject to ongoing monitoring and will be reviewed on an annual basis to report on progress against equality objectives and priorities.

6. Our priority actions

Equality Objective	Priority	Actions	Lead (to be allocated)	By
Enabling the council to meet its priorities and achieve outcomes in an equitable and inclusive way.	1. Self-assessment against LGA Equality Framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake detailed self-assessment against LGA Equality Framework to measure and review equality objectives and outcomes.</li> </ul>	HR/OD & Strategy Commissioning & Insight	Mar-2024
	2. Review data collection and analysis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review/ develop capture of information on health / social determinants of health and, data relating to our diverse communities including those sharing protected characteristics and wider socio economic and diversity factors (to for example inform robust equality analysis.</li> <li>Enhanced data collection / analysis by geographical area, protected characteristics, intersectionality and impact / outcomes</li> </ul>	Tbc	September 2024  Mar 2026
	3. Revisit our approach to equality analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalise and seek approval for new equality analysis approach.</li> <li>Roll out training on new equality analysis template and approach with bespoke training for colleagues involved in commissioning cycle.</li> <li>Review processes in place for monitoring and reporting of equality outcomes within Commissioning and Procurement.</li> </ul>	Tbc - HR/OD & Strategy Commissioning & Insight	Dec-2023  Mar-2024  Jun-2025
	4. Public Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Consultation and Engagement Strategy with specific guidance on inclusive engagement including use of positive action to support representation.</li> <li>Foster good community relations through celebrating diversity.</li> </ul>	Tbc	March 2024  Ongoing annual delivery



Equality Objective	Priority	Actions	Lead (to be allocated)	By
<b>All employees feel safe and are enabled to Be Yourself at Work.</b>	5. Promote zero tolerance on bullying and harassment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce Mutual Respect at Work policy.</li> </ul>	HR/OD	Dec-2023
	6. Keep employees safe from disrespect and all kinds of discrimination / hate incidents perpetrated by customers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review mechanisms for diversity incident reporting.</li> </ul>	HR/OD	Sept-2024
	7. Supporting and developing the BYAW Engagement Model including BYAW Staff Networks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to promote and develop staff networks based on the SUCCESS model (see Appendix 3).</li> <li>Involve and consult with staff networks on employee engagement through the Staff Engagement transformation workstream.</li> </ul>	HR/OD  People Transformation Lead(s)	Ongoing
	8. Ally to All Programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and roll out Ally to All Programme across the council (See Appendix 2).</li> </ul>	HR/OD	Mar 2025 Phase 1 completion
<b>Our workforce better reflects the diversity of North Lincolnshire's residents.</b>	9. Enabling a more representatively diverse organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote BYAW and staff networks through recruitment and onboarding processes.</li> </ul>	HR/OD	Dec-2023
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop the focus and understanding of workforce diversity through the Rightsizing the Organisation transformation workstream scope and activities.</li> </ul>	People Transformation Lead(s)	Mar-2024
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revisit how we use external (population) and internal (workforce) data to measure and monitor diversity representation.</li> </ul>	Tbc - HR/OD and Data Innovation	Jun-2024
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extend gender pay gap reporting to include other protected characteristics.</li> </ul>	HR/OD	Mar-2025

## Towards Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Roadmap

### Intent and ownership

- Commitment explicit in EDI statement.
- EDI Strategic Framework aligned with the Council Plan.
- Ally to All Framework.
- Use of LGA Equalities Framework as a commitment to and contributing to measures of success.
- EDI integral in internal and external facing functions and activity EDI.
- EDI Steering Group.
- Active influence in partnership working eg. Humber and North Yorkshire Partnership (ICB) EDI Assembly.

### Outcomes through sponsorship, positive action measures and monitoring

- SMART EDI objectives and action planning.
- Legal requirement to report on Gender Pay Gap. Enhanced pay gap reporting measures around disability, race, sexual orientation.
- Positive action through employee lifecycle to mitigate bias and improve representation of under-represented groups.
- Sponsor staff networks to support capacity building and representation of traditionally marginalised groups in decision making spaces through mentoring, reverse mentoring and shadowing.
- Diversity monitoring in service delivery informs insight and equality analysis.

### Safety, trust, visibility representation and belonging

- All employees are enabled to have pride, purpose and sense of belonging and feel safe to *Be Yourself at Work* (BYAW).
- BYAW engagement model and sponsorship of staff network activity.
- Zero tolerance to bullying and harassment.
- BYAW and empowering communities with lived experience voices.
- Ally to All programme rollout.

### Accountability through monitoring and review

- Use of equality analyses with improved data to enable action on identified gaps.
- Review use of LGA Equalities Framework benchmarking.
- Impact of agile working for EDI and culture eg. impact of proximity bias for under-represented groups.
- Monitoring data, targets and annual reporting.
- Involvement of stakeholders in review – place partners, Humber and North Yorkshire (ICB) employees, customers, communities.

Appendix 2: Ally to All Framework

**Be Yourself at Work (BYAW) Ally to All Framework**

Where we want to be:

All employees can have pride, purpose and a sense of belonging

Objectives:

- All employees feel safe and enabled to Be Yourself at Work.
- Our workforce better reflects the diversity of North Lincolnshire’s residents.
- Enabling the council to meet its priorities and achieve outcomes in an equitable and inclusive way.

Our values

Equality of opportunity

Excellence

Integrity

Self-responsibility

Link to council outcomes

**Safe:** Employees feel safe to be themselves at work. With diversity represented in the workforce, communities can be enabled, confident that their needs are understood.

**Well:** Employees are enabled to BYAW. Lived experiences insight contributes. EDI integral to delivery of the council’s priorities. An ally to self and others.

**Prosperous:** Knowledge and talent of diverse workforce enables insight, innovation and practice which supports and enables economic inclusion and a new relationship with communities.

**Connected:** Highly developed ally skill set enables confidence to BYAW and authentically deliver services to best meet diverse customer needs including enabling community and family first approaches

How we will enable and achieve allyship

**1. Creating the conditions**

- Working cultures and practices enable behaviour necessary for everyone to have pride, purpose and sense of belonging.
- Safe to have challenging discussions – lift the understanding, lift the conversation.

**2. Sponsor and develop staff networks and engagement model**

- Internal consultants • Resource maximisers • Pipelines of new insight, knowledge and talent • Vehicle of engagement • Change agent • Critical friend • Peer support and mentoring • Innovation enablers

**3. Organisational Allyship**

- Enable employees at all levels to be an ally – build awareness, knowledge and behaviour change.
- Enable the connection with council functions, priorities and outcomes – evidencing that we are an ally to diverse communities.
- Work towards inclusion of allyship in job descriptions.

**4. Strategic in approach**

- Sponsorship.
- Use of positive action and impact analysis measures.
- Training at all levels and embedded into leadership and management training.
- Conversations and communication about allyship.
- Peer and reverse mentoring for senior managers.
- Allyship embedded through the employee lifecycle – onboarding, promotion, development, exit.
- Equity Ambassadors.

## **Ally to All Programme**

### **Supporting employees with the basic tools, training and resources needed to create space to:**

- Work inclusively with respect, empathy and understanding.
- Check conscious and unconscious bias and privilege.
- Develop emotional intelligence, emotional agility, and active listening skills
- Empower all employees to BYAW.

### **Developing the Ally to All programme based on:**

- Understanding the different needs, privilege and lived experiences of employees in majority and different minority groups
- Developing a suite of resources and training from the basic tools foundation that can be made bespoke to support ally behaviours and confidence in practice
- Recognise the value of investment in positive action activities to empower and develop new and innovative pipelines of insight, opportunity, and talent.

### **The programme will be underpinned by the following principles:**

- All-inclusive in approach no hierarchy of need
- Barriers faced by more than one group are addressed together. There is transferable learning from understanding different and intersecting lived experiences.
- Intersectional diversity is valued and identified issues addressed through training and resources.

Developing and mapping strategic organisational ally capacity and operationally developing employee ally behaviours all contributing to council aims and values and internally into inclusively agile working cultures.

Harnessing insight of the different BYAW staff networks and conversations appropriately in training and resources and all relevant functions and activities workforce and customer/commissioning focused.

## Appendix 3: BYAW Staff Networks' SUCCESS Model

### Be Yourself at Work Staff Networks' SUCCESS Model

**S**upporting with peer support through mentoring, reverse mentoring and allyship.

**U**nderstanding the representation of diverse employees through network activity eg. shared lived experiences and workforce data and monitoring.

**C**onsulting the networks. Each network is an 'expert' body that can support the organisation to make services inclusive and accessible to staff and residents with diverse minority lived experiences.

**C**hampioning the creativity, innovation and insight of particular lived experiences to enable improving experiences for all employees and residents.

**E**ducating to enable through the Ally to All Framework and programme. Raising awareness of the challenges (bias, discrimination, ableism, homophobia, racism, transphobia and other microaggressions, emotional labour) faced by colleagues to encourage allyship, inform policy and practice, remove stigma, taboos and barriers to progression.

**S**haping organisational development with innovative insight of lived experience. Enabling inclusive agile working practices to meet the needs of a diverse workforce to have a sense of pride, purpose and belonging.

**S**trengthening visibility and representation – the workforce better represents the diversity of residents in North Lincolnshire. Celebrating diversity and sponsoring events with equity.

#### 7 lived experience led staff networks:

1. Black, Asian and Minority Staff Network
2. Carers Staff Network
3. Disabled Staff Network
4. Early Careers Staff Network
5. LGBT+ inclusive Staff Network
6. Menopause Staff Network
7. Veterans Staff Network