

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Council
<b>DATE</b>	2 October 2024
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<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Diversity in Recruitment Update
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	CORS/24/202
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<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	21

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 In accordance with the decision on the Organisational Structure report from Council on 7 February 2024, the Chief Executive was instructed to bring a report to Council by July 2024 providing further detail on the activity which has been undertaken to improve diversity in recruitment, including leadership and management roles.
- 1.2 The report was deferred from the July and August meetings of Council, and the opportunity has been taken to provide additional progress updates in this most recent version.

### 2 RECOMMENDATION

#### That the Council:

- 2.1 Note the actions contained in the report being taken to increase diversity in leadership.
- 2.2 Note the self-assessment and areas for further consideration contained within Appendix A.
- 2.3 Note that in the first appropriate committee cycle in 2025/26 the equality, diversity and inclusion action plan, first agreed in 2021, will be updated and reported to Staff Governance Committee for approval, as a result of the ongoing work, self-assessment exercise and new equality outcomes due to be presented for approval in April 2025.

### 3 CURRENT SITUATION

#### 3.1 Background and Context

- 3.1.1 In August 2022, Council approved the next phase and path for our transformation programme, with workforce strategy as a key element.

- 3.1.2 In October 2022, the Council approved the Interim Organisational Structure and also resolved that given the low proportion of Ethnic Minority employees in the Council compared to the UK, to agree that everything possible should be done by officers to ensure that employees who are suitably qualified and who identify as Ethnic Minority should be encouraged to apply for these senior posts.
- 3.1.3 The last [Equality Outcomes Mainstreaming Report 2017-2021](#) reported that Aberdeen City Council's senior leadership team consisted of fourteen members, seven male and seven female. At the time of writing this report, the Council has 23 employees at Chief Officer level or above (including interim arrangements and also the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership) - 12 male and 11 female. This shows a gender balance around 50%, which is higher than the national average of 37% for senior managers in local government. However, the 2017-2021 report also acknowledges that there is room for improvement in terms of other aspects of diversity, such as ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, and religion or belief.
- 3.1.4 In January 2023, our [Workforce Delivery Plan](#) was approved by Staff Governance Committee, which set out the detail for delivery of the workforce strategy aspect of the transformation programme, with our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion clearly stated within the strategic objectives.
- 3.1.5 In June 2023, Staff Governance Committee approved an update on the progress being made towards our [Equality Outcomes](#) and [EDI Action Plan](#), first approved in 2021. Our current employment-related outcomes are:
- Improve the diversity of our workforce and address any areas of underrepresentation, ensuring that there are equal opportunities for all protected groups (with consideration for both internal employees and external applicants), with a particular and prioritised focus on Age, Disability, Race and Sex.
  - Ensure that all of our employees who have protected characteristics feel fully valued, safe and included at work, with a particular and prioritised focus on Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Race, Sex and Sexual orientation.
- 3.1.6 The first outcome focuses on ensuring equality of opportunity in our *recruitment and selection processes*. The second outcome confirms our commitment to create a feeling of safety and belonging when *employees are at work*. Both aspects are critical to improving diversity in our workplace, as we must identify and remove barriers in all aspects of the employee experience – from recruitment, through development and into promotion opportunities. Having an inclusive work environment will mean that our employees will want to remain in our employment and to develop and progress their careers.
- 3.1.7 In April 2024, Staff Governance Committee approved a refresh of our [Equality, Diversity & Inclusion policy](#), which enabled us to reflect changes in legislation and the expectations of our citizens, and adopt recommendations from the Scottish Government for public sector organisations to lead the way in our commitment to diversity and inclusion.

3.1.8 In April 2024, Staff Governance Committee also approved a [Workforce Deep dive](#) which set out a detailed programme of activity exploring challenges in 'hard to fill' posts, exploring areas of occupational segregation, and provided an update with specific case study examples of how we are building workforce capacity and organisational resilience through attracting, recruiting and promoting talent, including at senior leadership levels.

### 3.1.9 Wider and National Context

3.1.10 In their 2022 [Anti-Racist Employment Strategy](#), the Scottish Government clearly sets out the economic and moral imperative for all employers to proactively challenge the systems and processes that create inequality in the workforce – and an expectation for the public sector to lead the way.

3.1.11 As reported by the Institute of Governance and Public Policy (IGPP) there is a strong business rationale for employers have diverse and inclusive workplaces – and having workforces that are representative of the population.



3.1.12 Specifically for local authorities, diversity in senior leadership is important because:

- It reflects the diversity of our citizens, communities, and stakeholders, and enables us to better understand and respond to their needs and expectations.
- It fosters a culture of inclusion and belonging, where different perspectives, backgrounds, and identities are valued and respected.
- It enhances our innovation and creativity, as diverse teams can generate more ideas, challenge assumptions, and solve problems more effectively.
- It improves our performance and reputation, as diverse leaders can inspire and motivate others, attract and retain talent, and build trust and credibility with internal and external partners.

- It fosters good relations between the Council and communities – if they feel that they are represented in leadership.

3.1.13 It seems however that there remains a lack of diversity in executive leadership as the Scottish Government report in their 2022 A Fairer Scotland for All, that “37% of FTSE 100 companies surveyed do not have any ethnic minority representation on their boards” and that action needs to be taken by leaders and employers to address this.

3.1.14 The recent Scotland’s Local Government Workforce Report 2024 provides an insight into the challenges faced across all 32 Local Authorities in improving their workforce diversity profile. The report provides an overview of the overall picture of Scottish Council workforce characteristics and how this compares to the characteristics of the general populations within council areas. The data shows that across Scotland, Councils have an ageing workforce and an under-representation of employees from minority ethnic groups and employees with disabilities. Like ourselves, many Councils are actively working to improve diversity. As members of the national Society of Personnel and Development Scotland (SPDS), we benefit from the sharing of best practice on how Councils are tackling some of these issues.

### **3.1.15 Our commitment to improve diversity in recruitment, including leadership and management roles.**

3.1.16 Aberdeen City Council is committed to increasing the diversity of our senior leadership team and ensuring that they represent the full spectrum of our workforce and society. One of the challenges identified in the Workforce Deep Dive was the difficulty of recruiting and retaining Chief Officers, who play a crucial role in leading and delivering the strategic objectives of the organisation, as there is a national shortage of experienced and qualified candidates for these senior roles, and the Council faces strong competition from other public and private sector employers.

3.1.17 Since 2019, we have focused on our internal workforce as a key mechanism to achieve our workforce goals and prepare for the future. Our approach to internal movement and recruitment of internal staff is to retain skills and experience within the organisation, whilst upskilling and developing our workforce to move to service critical roles as they arise.

3.1.18 This approach gives us agility and flexibility in our workforce, enabling us to meet periods of increased demand. It provides our existing workforce with opportunities for promotion, development and career transition and therefore supports retention of our committed and skilled employees. By tapping into the transferable skills, experience and knowledge of existing employees, the organisation also minimises the need to go to external market, thereby also avoiding the associated additionality in recruitment costs.

3.1.19 This also presents us with challenges on increasing the diversity – if the internal pool we are selecting from is itself lacking diversity.

3.1.20 Therefore, when we do go to the open market, it is crucial that our approach to recruitment has diversity and inclusion at its heart. We need to reach out to the widest possible pool of talent when we have external vacancies. We need to attract candidates from groups that are currently underrepresented at the council, such as minority ethnic groups, disabled people, LGBT+ people, and young people. We need to ensure that our application process is fair and accessible, and that we remove any unnecessary barriers or biases that may discourage potential applicants. We need to provide training and guidance to our recruiting managers on best practice recruitment, including unconscious bias and inclusive language. And, once we recruit someone, we need them to feel welcome and valued as part of One Team – Aberdeen, by providing a comprehensive and supportive onboarding and induction process, where new employees can learn about our vision, values, and culture, and connect with their colleagues and mentors.

3.1.21 This report therefore provides an update on how we are improving equality in recruitment internally, through a strategic approach to workforce planning to increase diversity in leadership and management roles; and how we are improving recruitment externally, to build diversity at all levels and in all roles in the council.

## **Progress Report**

### **3.2 Improving diversity through workforce planning**

3.2.1 Workforce planning is a key priority for Aberdeen City Council, with clear cognisance of, and practical action plans to mitigate against, the risks and challenges we face due to a contracting workforce, external factors and pressures, budgetary restrictions, and changes in the local economy. Failure to address these issues is acknowledged as having potential to significantly impact our capacity and capability to deliver services and on the resilience of our workforce.

3.2.2 In November 2021, a new approach to supporting Chief Officers and their Senior Management Teams with workforce planning was launched. This involved Senior Management Teams completing 'Cluster People Development Plans' to ensure they take a holistic, strategic approach to finding, recruiting and retaining talent in these roles, which takes account of statutory training needs, diversity training needs and digital and technological developments.

3.2.3 Since this time, Chief Officers and their teams of Service Managers (SMTs) now complete a template on an annual basis, this asks them to 'horizon scan' the needs, risks, legislative changes, and hard-to-fill posts within their cluster and update their Cluster People Development Plan to set out what continuous professional development, support and budget they require from People & Citizen Services to meet their workforce needs.

3.2.4 The Cluster People Development Plan requires Senior Management Teams to look at their workforce profile data and identify any areas of under-

representation of any groups in particular roles or at any particular level within their services and propose ideas or solutions that could increase diversity. This is captured and monitored corporately so that ideas and good practice examples can be shared.

### 3.3 Taking Positive Action to encourage diversity in leadership

3.3.1 Positive discrimination is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010 – this means we cannot recruit or promote a person solely because they have a relevant protected characteristic.

3.3.2 It is permissible however for an employer to adopt **positive action** to meet the needs of under-represented or disadvantaged groups under section 158 of the Equality Act 2010. This means taking steps to improve equality in the workplace – such as including statements in recruitment advertising to encourage applications from under-represented groups; offering work experience or internships to help certain groups get opportunities or to progress at work; and offering shadowing or mentoring to groups with particular needs. It is accepted that these interventions do not always guarantee diversity and that it may take considerable time to see change.

3.3.3 With this in mind, we have taken proactive measures to adopt positive action and enable employees with any protected characteristics – to develop their skills and become suitably qualified and experienced, so that when senior posts become available, they are confident, capable and ready to undertake them.

3.3.4 For example, we have created talent pipelines to identify and develop potential leaders from underrepresented groups - for example minority ethnic, disabled, LGBT+, and young people - and provide them with opportunities for career development and personal growth.

3.3.5 A talent pipeline is a proactive and strategic approach to recruiting and developing employees for current and future roles within an organisation. It involves identifying, attracting, engaging, and nurturing potential candidates who have the skills, competencies, and values that align with the organisation's goals and culture. A talent pipeline can help an organisation fill critical roles quickly, reduce recruitment costs, improve retention, and foster diversity and inclusion.

3.3.6 Our Aspiring Leaders programme is one such talent pipeline. The 2023 cohort focused on Chief Officers, as a hard-to-fill role, and provided a year-long programme of intensive development for fourteen candidates, who were supported by their own Chief Officers as part of their Cluster's succession plan. Three candidates who participated in the 2023 programme have successfully stepped into a senior role, and their achievement is celebrated on our [intranet](#).

- 3.3.7 The programme was promoted to our Equality Ambassadors Network and Equality Working Groups, and [advertising for the programme](#) set out our aspirations to increase diversity in leadership:

*“We want to improve on diversity at our leadership level in the organisation. One of our equality outcomes for 21-25 is to ensure that we focus on improving diversity with a particular focus on age, disability, race and sex. We would, therefore, encourage applications from those who are under 30 or over 60, those who consider themselves to have a disability, those from a minority ethnic background and females as we are conscious that we have diversity gaps in these areas at leadership level.*

*We are aware that there are barriers in place for certain people within those groups and would encourage anyone in those categories who wishes to apply, and is comfortable to do so, to get in touch with [peopledevelopment@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:peopledevelopment@aberdeencity.gov.uk) where a member of staff will happily have a discreet conversation with you and offer any additional support, guidance and advice available for you during the process.”*

- 3.3.8 Whilst promoting the 2023 Aspiring Leaders programme to our Equality Working Groups, they provided the observation that we would not see diverse internal applicants for programmes aimed at Service manager / Chief Officer level unless we improved diversity within the applicant pools at lower grades in the council and take a more ‘grass roots’ approach to developing talent outside of management or leadership roles.

- 3.3.9 In response, we have developed an 'Accelerator Scheme' to coincide with our leadership and management development programmes. This Accelerator Scheme offers additional support and positive action for those with protected characteristics – to increase their confidence and ameliorate their participation in the programme. This support will be tailored to the individual and the programme and can include: enhanced support from the People Development team (e.g. one-to-one adviser, a coach, a mentor); adaptations and adjustments to the application process; and removal of barriers such as timings or format of delivery. Following feedback from the Equality Working Groups and Equality Ambassadors, the scheme is to be implemented in a way that does not identify the Accelerator participants on any programme, unless they choose to disclose it themselves.

- 3.3.10 By using the Accelerator Scheme, we hope to diversify our workforce at first line management level and develop a more diverse pool of candidates who are ready, confident, available and suitable for management roles when they arise. This, in time, will diversify our middle management ranks and lead to a more diverse internal pool of candidates available for Chief Officer development and progression.

- 3.3.11 To kickstart this grassroots diversification of our leadership and management roles, our [2024 Aspiring Leaders programme](#) seeks to select and develop candidates who are looking to make their *first steps* into people management,

and the Accelerator Scheme has been heavily promoted as part of this. 53 applications for this programme have been received – of which 28 candidates have requested that their application be considered under the Accelerator Scheme. See Figure 1. This response suggests that there is strong desire in the workforce for a programme that specifically seeks to increase diversity in leadership.

The Accelerator Scheme

Aberdeen City Council is committed to upholding the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in everything we do. As part of our EDI Action Plan, we have an Accelerator Scheme, which aims to improve diversity in leadership levels at Aberdeen City Council. There are 4 key groups that are currently underrepresented at leadership level, and applications are particularly encouraged from those who are under 30, those who consider themselves to have a disability, those from a minority ethnic background and women.

To enable us to take positive action to address under-representation from people with these protected characteristics, we can offer individuals who would like their application to be considered under the Accelerator Scheme the following:

- A guaranteed interview for a place on the Aspiring Leaders programme.
- Undertake development in alternative or more accessible ways
- Explore adjustments and additional support.

8. Would you like your application to be considered under the Accelerator Scheme? \*

Yes

No

9. What barriers to progression or development have you experienced or observed in the past?

For example timings of courses clashing with caring responsibilities; format of delivery not adapted to ability or disability, perceived bias in the selection panel, etc?

Enter your answer

10. What additional support or adjustments could be put in place for the Aspiring Leaders programme that might make it easier for you to access the programme?

Enter your answer

Figure 1: screenshot to show Aspiring Leaders 2024 application form - with Accelerator Scheme questions

3.3.12 Another strategic use of our talent pipeline approach to progress and promote diversity throughout the organisation is through our Developing the Young Workforce initiatives. Specific programmes such as our Apprenticeship Programme, Career Ready Programme and ABZ Employability Pathways Programme enable us to tap into the rich seam of diverse young people in the city – and provide them with opportunities to experience work in a local authority, ensuring that their time with Aberdeen City Council is inspiring and attractive as a long-term career option. As well as work experience, these opportunities provide them access to support networks and opportunities to develop – all of which will help ensure they are in an optimal position to apply for any permanent job opportunities as they arise. We have many examples of success stories in this area, one being an employee who joined the Council as a Modern Apprentice and has gone on to complete a Graduate



Apprenticeship and has now progressed into a manager role. We anticipate reporting an increase in workforce diversity as a result of these schemes in our upcoming Equality Outcomes Mainstreaming Report in 2025.

### 3.4 Employee engagement to co-create a workplace that celebrates diversity

3.4.1 Our duty to improve diversity in recruitment does not stop once a candidate accepts a job with Aberdeen City Council. It is important that they feel a sense of belonging throughout their career – starting with a comprehensive and supportive onboarding and induction process that celebrates diversity.

3.4.2 To ensure we are getting this right for everyone, and meeting the diverse needs of our employees, we have co-created and are delivering an Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan with employee working groups, as follows:

- Age Working Group
- Young Employee Network
- Disability Network
- LGBT+ Network
- Race Equality and Diversity Network (RED)
- Working Group for Sex as a Protected Characteristic
- Equality Ambassadors Network

3.4.3 These Employee Working Groups have been actively working on activities, communications, promotions and events which further promote equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

#### 3.4.4 Summary of Recent Work

Protected Characteristic	Recent Activity
<b>Age</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working on signing up to the Age Friendly Employer Pledge which is a nationwide programme for employers who recognise the importance and value of older workers.</li> <li>• Physical wellbeing programme, predominantly targeted at over 50s to try out sports facilities at Sport Aberdeen.</li> <li>• Physical Wellbeing Assessments at Altens targeted at older workforce.</li> <li>• The Young Employee Network was established in 2018 and since the end of 2023 work has been ongoing to re-energise the Network which has been supported by the Chief Executive.</li> </ul>
<b>Disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organised and facilitated a Year of the Disabled Worker event.</li> <li>• Reviewed the Council’s Disability Confident accreditation.</li> <li>• Various posts and awareness campaigns on the intranet</li> <li>• Supported the development and implementation of reasonable adjustment passports.</li> <li>• Supported the ABZWorks Job Fair for Disabled People</li> <li>• Provided suggested improvements for disability data capture on CoreHR</li> </ul>

<b>Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Held a stall at Grampian Pride 2023, 2024 and participated in the city march.</li> <li>• Organised a pilot LGBT+ training session.</li> <li>• Added the option for gender neutral title (Mx) on CoreHR</li> <li>• Various posts and awareness campaigns on the intranet's <a href="#">EDI Hub</a></li> </ul>
<b>Race</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organised introduction of the diversity STAR award</li> <li>• Various posts and awareness campaigns on the intranet</li> <li>• Supported Aberdeen Mela 2023</li> <li>• Organised and Facilitated a Black History Month 2023 event with planning for 2024 underway.</li> <li>• Reviewing possibility for an anti-racism strategy</li> <li>• Review of recruitment and selection process</li> <li>• Review of unconscious bias training</li> <li>• Review of multi-faith room</li> <li>• Provided intersectional content for International Women's Day 2023 (see section below)</li> </ul>
<b>Sex</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Menopause Support Final.pdf (aberdeencity.gov.uk)</a></li> <li>• Extensive information, guidance and resources associated with menopause promoted across the organisation.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Pregnancy Loss Support Final.pdf (aberdeencity.gov.uk)</a></li> <li>• Campaign for International Women's Day 2023 with intranet pages with information, guidance and blogs from female leaders in the organisation</li> </ul>

### 3.5 Commitment to Anti-Racism in Employment and Pay Gap Reporting

3.5.1 In 2020, Aberdeen City Council committed to the recommendations following the Scottish Parliament's Equalities and Human Rights Committee Inquiry which were:

*The Committee recommends those in public authority leadership positions undertake an assessment of their organisation's understanding of racism and the structural barriers that may exist within their organisations. Public authorities should integrate their ambitions into their next strategic plan. Their strategic goal should be underpinned by specific outcomes and supported by timely monitoring. Public authorities should be transparent about their targets and their progress in delivering their outcomes.*

3.5.2 **Action taken:** Equality, Diversity and Inclusion has been embedded into our workforce plans and delivery plans. Our race equality group has been set up to ensure that race equality is at the fore. They are currently developing a Race Equality Strategy that will be consulted on widely to co-create a final strategy.

*The Committee recommends public authorities should review their recruitment procedures and practice against the Scottish Government's toolkit and make the necessary changes.*

3.5.3 **Action taken:** The race equality group worked with the Talent team to review our recruitment and selection process against the toolkit and have since worked with the team to create an Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Recruitment pack that is promoted on our social media platforms, and available on our website, forming part of all of our job adverts, and embedded within recruitment and selection training for managers.

*The Committee recommends that all public authorities subject to the Scottish specific Public Sector Equality Duty should, as a minimum, voluntarily record and publish their ethnicity pay gap and produce an action plan to deliver identified outcomes.*

3.5.4 **Action taken:** To meet this recommendation, People & Citizen Services and Data & Insights have developed a reporting mechanism in PowerBI so that Ethnicity Pay Gap Reporting is ready for the next statutory reporting cycle where this is required (2025). Since this time, at the Society of Personnel & Development Scotland (SPDS) executive meeting in March 2024 it was agreed that all local authorities will move to a consistent approach for pay gap reporting from April 2025. This will provide us with a nationally agreed approach for calculating our Ethnicity Pay Gap, Race Pay Gap and Gender Pay Gap – and we commit to publishing these in our Equality Outcomes Mainstreaming Report in 2025.

### 3.5.5 **Management Training and Guidance**

3.5.6 Management training is important in improving diversity in recruitment because it helps managers to understand the benefits of having a diverse workforce, the challenges and barriers that some groups may face in accessing employment opportunities, and the best practices and tools to attract, select and retain diverse talent. Management training can also help to raise awareness of unconscious bias, stereotypes and discrimination that may affect hiring decisions, and provide strategies to overcome them. By equipping managers with the knowledge and skills to foster a culture of inclusion and respect, management training can contribute to building a more diverse and effective organisation.

3.5.7 To ensure that our recruiting managers are confident and competent in supporting diversity through recruitment, the following training courses are available:

- [Equality & Diversity for Managers E-Learning](#) (mandatory for all people managers)
- [Unconscious Bias E-Learning](#)
- [Recruitment and Selection Training for Managers](#) - Face to Face Course
- [Mental Health Awareness Tools for Managers – Virtual Course](#)
- [Managing People of all abilities](#) - E-Learning
- [Inclusive Language](#) – E-Learning
- [What are reasonable adjustments](#) – E-Learning
- [Introduction to Neurodiversity](#) – E-Learning
- [Gender Equity](#) – E-Learning

- [Responding to Microaggressions at work](#) – E-Learning

3.5.8 Our recruitment and selection guidance states that all managers involved in recruitment should undertake the Recruitment & Selection Training for Managers course, which includes equality, diversity and inclusion. The Chair of the Interview Panel must have completed this training to ensure processes are carried out fairly and in accordance with the recruitment and selection guidance.

3.5.9 In addition to training, we also provide managers with one-to-one guidance and advice from the People & Organisational Development Advisers and consultancy from the Equalities Officers to support their Integrated Impact Assessments and decision making. Self-help tools and guidance are available at all times including:

- [A Recruitment, Selection and Inclusion Guide](#): an online intranet page for managers on how to make their selection processes more inclusive.
- [Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#): updated and approved by Staff Governance Committee May 2024
- [Equality Diversity and Inclusion Hub](#): information, advice and guidance, access to training, join networks and conversations, book onto events, and provide feedback or ideas. Employee groups have had significant input into the development of this hub.

## 3.6 Employer of Choice

3.6.1 Attracting diverse talent is a priority to ensure that our workforce and leadership mirror the rich diversity of the city we are here to serve. At the heart of our approach to recruiting a diverse workforce is ensuring that Aberdeen City Council is seen and promoted as an **employer of choice** where everyone feels valued.

3.6.2 Being an 'employer of choice' means that Aberdeen City Council has a positive reputation and image in the labour market, and attracts and retains high-quality employees who are committed, productive and engaged. It also means that the council offers a competitive reward package, provides opportunities for career development and learning, fosters a healthy and inclusive work environment, and values employee feedback and participation.

3.6.3 In today's digital age, social media is crucial for organisations to enhance visibility and connect with diverse candidates from different geographical locations, cultures, and professional backgrounds, who may not be reached through traditional recruitment methods. We therefore use social media platforms such as LinkedIn, and Facebook to showcase our culture and commitment to diversity through regular posts about job vacancies, employee stories, awards and recognition and strategic initiatives that focus on creating an inclusive workplace. This enables us to build our brand as an employer of choice, provide prospective employees with a transparent view of what it is like to work for the council and attract candidates whose personal values align with the organisation. We have a dedicated page on [MyJobScotland](#) to

showcase for potential applicants our commitment to diversity and are currently developing a short video to showcase the Council as an 'employer of choice' to attract as wide a pool of applicants as possible to come and work for Aberdeen City Council.

- 3.6.4 Another way we continue to present as an 'employer of choice', and to attract a diverse workforce, is by achieving, maintaining and advertising our accreditations and signed pledges that signal our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, such as Disability Confident, and Menopause Workplace Pledge. We also do this through developing, supporting and attending events such as Grampian Pride and Black History Month events. Work is ongoing in this area with employee working groups focusing on ensuring we take advantage of these types of initiatives.
- 3.6.5 We have published our [Fair Work First statement](#) on our website to show that we are aligned with the Scottish Government's requirements, and that we expect any commissioned sub-contractors to comply.
- 3.6.6 Another way we are increasing our reach as an employer to increase our talent pool is through our approaches to hybrid and flexible working, developing staff digital skills and use of technology.
- 3.6.7 By promoting our approach to hybrid working, we can demonstrate that we are a modern, progressive, and flexible employer that cares about its employees and the community. This can help us to attract and retain talent from diverse backgrounds, locations, and sectors, and to enhance our reputation and competitiveness in the market.
- 3.6.8 Research suggests that having effective family friendly policies in place supports women's equality in the workplace. With a workforce that is 70% female, a gender pay gap in favour of women, and 56% of the top 5% of earners at Aberdeen City Council being female, it is clear that our commitment to family friendly policies is currently effective. At the same time, it is important that we continue to update and upgrade our offering for parents in the workplace and identify any aspects where intersectionality may be at play. In the context of our family-friendly policies, this means that a one-size-fits-all approach may not be sufficient to meet the diverse needs of all employees who can experience multiple, overlapping forms of discrimination or disadvantage. Specifically, women from minority ethnic backgrounds, those with disabilities, and/or those in LGBTQ+ relationships might face unique challenges that are not fully addressed by older policies.
- 3.6.9 To address these challenges, a review is underway to ensure that our policies and initiatives are inclusive and considerate of the unique experiences of all employees. This will deliver the following:
- All of our in scope and available policies, provisions and guidance documents are consolidated, streamlined, readily available, easy to understand and clear for those who need it at point of need, packaged within a family friendly 'suite.'

- The documents within the family friendly 'suite' are updated so that the language is inclusive and contemporary, reflecting the organisation's Guiding Principles as well as all family types and circumstances, such as LGBTQ+ couples and kinship carers.
- Employee entitlements can be easily understood so that employees make the most informed choices and managers are able to provide consistent and appropriate support and decisions.
- The family friendly 'suite' is well-connected to, and makes the most of, government websites and toolkits that are available for employees.
- A communications and engagement plan will be developed to encourage more male employees to make use of family leave provisions.
- Support provisions, such as entitlements around pregnancy loss and counselling services, will be readily available at point of need so that employees will have easy access to support.
- The organisation will maintain its compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and any other legislative requirements.

### **3.7 Supporting Diverse Applicants Directly**

3.7.1 An additional way that the Council is increasing its visibility and attractiveness as an employer is by interacting with the local community and schools, colleges and universities, raising awareness of the different career paths and opportunities available.

3.7.2 To attract and recruit high quality candidates directly from university and provide them with crucial workplace experience that can increase their likelihood to success when applying for senior posts, we continue to strengthen our partnership with local Colleges and Universities and support internships, work placements and regularly attend careers fairs and employer events and share our vacancies on their 'Jobs Boards'. For example, we are working with the University of Aberdeen on an Internship programme (funded by the University) where students will gain an insight and experience in an area of work related to their studies, the most recent example being the Countryside Ranger service. We are supporting the University's new Shadowing Programme that provides students with a day shadowing a Council service, aligned to their choice of study, providing an insight into that field and giving the student an opportunity to make connections in the world of work. Partnerships with universities allow the Council to connect with a diverse range of students, who may otherwise not consider the Council as a potential future employer.

3.7.3 To further broaden our reach and promote our vacancies, particularly for some of our harder to fill roles, we are now sharing our vacancies with a wider range of Universities across Scotland and the UK. We are also developing promotional material to promote Aberdeen as a city to live and work; to try to attract applicants from as wide a reach as possible and this will include a link to the [Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Recruitment pack](#). For example, we have upcoming recruitment for Environmental Health Officers, which are very hard to fill roles. As part of the recruitment campaign, this additional

promotional material may help attract applicants outwith the Aberdeen area, who may otherwise not have considered a role in Aberdeen.

- 3.7.4 Through ABZWorks, the Talent Team has attended a number of recruitment fairs to support our minority ethnic community, people who are displaced, refugees, asylum seekers. We have also attended events run by Department of Work and Pensions for job seekers who are over 50 years, and mothers/carers who are seeking to return to work. In March 2023 we supported the [Unison Year of the Disabled Worker](#) initiative at an event to support people with disabilities in the workplace – this was designed to be as inclusive as possible for people who are neurodiverse, by ensuring the first hour is as quiet and calm as possible for their arrival and participation. Later in November 2023 we held an event to celebrate [Black History Month](#) and Year of the Black Worker, which included workshops to bring together Aberdeen City Council senior leaders and members of the black community, who shared their experience of interacting with the Council, including our recruitment processes.
- 3.7.5 Furthermore, the Council supports various initiatives and campaigns that align with its values and goals, such as the Living Wage, Fair Work principles, and the Scottish Business Pledge. These activities help the Council to build a positive reputation and relationship with the community, and to attract and develop talent for the future.
- 3.7.6 Aberdeen City Council has an Equality, Diversity & Inclusion recruitment pack available for potential applicants on webpage [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion as an employer](#). This resource sets out our commitment and culture to welcoming and celebrating diversity, with a welcome from the Chief Executive, and provides potential applicants with information about equality, diversity and inclusion, their entitlements and also any adaptations to selection processes that can be requested, and how to do this. It has been promoted on social media, is available on our website, forms part of all of our job adverts on the myjobscotland website and is embedded within recruitment and selection training for managers.

### 3.8 Next steps

#### 3.8.1 Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report 2025

3.8.2 In line with our Public Sector Equality Duty and Scottish Specific Duties, we are required to analyse and publish our workforce diversity data every two years as an Equality Outcomes Mainstreaming Report. The next report is due in March 2025 and this we will record progress made towards the previous Equality Outcomes and on all initiatives from 2021 to 2025 that have been in service of progressing ED&I, including those relating to recruitment and development, the Accelerator scheme, and the Aspiring Leaders programmes for 2023 and 2024.

3.8.3 The 2025 Equality Outcomes Mainstreaming Report will provide a snapshot of the current citywide and organisational context and demographics - and how we will continue to put equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of how we operate as a service provider, as an employer and in our collaborative work with partners through refreshed Equality Outcomes for the next four years.

3.8.4 Employee engagement will soon commence to gather *qualitative* data on all aspects of our employees' lived experience of diversity and inclusion within Aberdeen City Council, including relating to their recruitment experiences.

3.8.5 To ensure we have the *quantitative* data readily available for reporting purposes, and also to enable us to view live data to monitor trends and identify issues, colleagues from People & Citizen Services and Data & Insights are working together to view our workforce diversity data through PowerBI. This will also allow for live monitoring and analysis which at the moment is carried out only at annual intervals due to the manual intervention required. This will be anonymous and only for monitoring and analysis purposes, as well as to be able to target interventions and solutions.

3.8.6 We will continue to work in partnership with our equality partners - GREC, Abledeen and DeafBlind – and carry out Integrated Impact Assessments to build our capability and understanding of barriers, inequality and intersectionality for citizens, including around recruitment, to help shape our next Equality Outcomes and action plan.

#### 3.8.7 Strategic Performance Indicators for the Improvement Service

3.8.8 As part of our commitment to work with partners to establish networks and understand inequality at a national level, gender pay gap data is provided to the Improvement Service annually, along with the percentage breakdown of our top 5% of earners by sex.

3.8.9 From 2025 onwards, we will be required to publish disability pay gap and ethnicity pay gap in addition to gender pay gap. At the Society of Personnel & Development Scotland (SPDS) Executive meeting in March 2024 it was agreed that all local authorities will move to a consistent approach for pay gap



reporting from April 2025. COSLA have shared a formula for calculations that all local authorities are required to pilot, and preparations for this are now well underway. This will provide us with a clearer picture on our pay gap for people in these protected groups – and also enable us to compare our progress against other local authorities in Scotland.

### **3.8.10 Knowing our workforce through data**

3.8.11 Understanding our workforce data is key to any actions taken forward through an equality strategy.

3.8.12 Whilst we hold accurate and council-wide data on age and gender of our employees, as this information is captured at preferred candidate stage; the data held on an employee's ethnicity, sexuality, religion, or any disability is not captured at pre-employment stage. Employees can choose to provide this information as part of their diversity information held within our HR/ Payroll system. As a result of a poster and intranet campaign, currently 24% of our workforce has provided this data (this is higher than the national average of 11% in 2018 and 19% in 2021)<sup>1</sup>. This means that our disability and ethnicity age gap reporting for 2024-25 may not be fully representative of the true diversity in our workforce.

3.8.13 In order to improve and increase the accuracy of reported statistics, proactive communication and engagement will take place with the workforce to increase self-identification and completion.

3.8.14 Even with proactive awareness raising with the workforce, it should be noted that some employees will then choose not to disclose their protected characteristics with their employer, for example due to privacy concerns, fear of discrimination, pervasive stigma, lack of understanding of benefits or rationale. Our intention therefore, to support both Equality Outcomes engagement and Pay Gap reporting in 2025, is to undertake a diversity-positive communications campaign throughout the workforce that celebrates diversity in all its forms.

3.8.15 We will continue to follow Scottish Government guidance on improving data disclosure on ethnic background and all other protected characteristics.

3.8.16 We will continue working towards Scottish Government guidance, resources and toolkits to ensure we are doing everything possible to improve diversity in recruitment, including leadership and management roles.

## **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Initiatives are funded by the allocated Corporate Training budget held within People and Citizen Services, following careful budgeting and allocation of funds to support the diversity and inclusion initiatives outlined

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

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<sup>1</sup> A Fairer Scotland for All: An Anti-Racist Employment Strategy

- 5.1 Positive discrimination is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010 (except in very limited circumstances relating to disability or certain roles). Examples of positive discrimination would include recruiting or promoting a person solely because they have a relevant protected characteristic or setting quotas to recruit or promote a particular number or proportion of people with protected characteristics irrespective of merit.
- 5.2 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 states that Local Authorities must appoint on merit.
- 5.3 It is permissible for an Employer to adopt [positive action](#) to meet the needs of under-represented or disadvantaged groups under section 158 of the Equality Act 2010.

## 6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

## 7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	Failure to meet strategic objectives due to lack of capacity.	The activities outlined in this report are assurance that work is undertaken to ensure that there is sufficient capacity in the workforce to deliver our strategic objectives.	L	Yes
<b>Compliance</b>	Failure to meet statutory requirements due to lack of capacity.	The activities outlined in this report are assurance that work is undertaken to ensure that	L	Yes

		there is sufficient capacity in the workforce to deliver our statutory requirements.		
<b>Operational</b>	<p>Failure to meet operational service delivery requirements due to lack of capacity.</p> <p>Flatter structures and reduced headcount could mean less opportunities.</p>	The activities outlined in this report are assurance that work is undertaken to ensure that there is sufficient capacity in the workforce to deliver our operational service delivery requirements.	L	Yes
<b>Financial</b>	<p>Financial and organisational constraints to diversity. Lack of money to support development activity. Lack of resource to develop and facilitate targeted programmes</p>	The activities outlined in this report are assurance that work is undertaken to ensure that there is an appropriate level of internal movement and workforce talent pipelining.	L	Yes
<b>Reputational</b>	Inability to attract and retain employees through not being an employer of choice.	The activities outlined in this report are assurance that work is undertaken to ensure that Aberdeen City Council remains an attractive employer for prospective and existing employees.	L	Yes
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	Inability to meet climate	The activities outlined in this	L	Yes

	and environmental goals due to lack of capacity.	report are assurance that work is undertaken to ensure that there is sufficient capacity in the workforce to deliver our climate and environmental goals.		
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## 8. OUTCOMES

<a href="#">COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2024-25</a>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<p><b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b></p> <p><a href="#">Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</a></p>	<p>The work outlined in this report supports the below taken from the Council’s Policy Statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the city’s universities, Northeast Scotland College and businesses to increase educational and training options and the number of care-experienced young people and young people from deprived communities, going onto positive destinations, including further and higher education, vocational training and apprenticeships. - Promote the number of apprenticeships on offer through the council</li> <li>• Ensure the Council follows best practice as a corporate parent to get the best outcomes for looked-after young people, those in kinship care and those with additional support needs such as autism, developmental disorders or mental health problems.</li> <li>• Recognise that the Council depends upon its staff to deliver the services it provides and believe the Council must properly reward, train and support its staff.</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Local Outcome Improvement Plan</a>	
<p>Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes</p>	<p>The work outlined in this report supports the below Stretch Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four hundred unemployed Aberdeen City residents supported into Fair Work by 2026</li> <li>• Five hundred Aberdeen City residents upskilled/ reskilled to enable them to move</li> </ul>

	into, within and between economic opportunities as they arise by 2026
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	<p>The work outlined in this report supports the below Stretch Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By meeting the health and emotional wellbeing needs of our care experienced children and young people they will have the same levels of attainment in education and positive destinations as their peers by 2026</li> <li>• 95% of all our children, including those living in our priority neighbourhoods (Quintiles 1 &amp; 2), will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.</li> <li>• 100% of our children with Additional Support Needs/ Disabilities will experience a positive destination by 2026.</li> </ul>
<b>Regional and City Strategies</b>	The work outlined in this report will support the delivery of: <a href="#">Workforce Delivery Plan – January 2023</a>

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	<p>An Integrated Impact Assessment for <a href="#">Recruitment and Selection</a> has been created and referred to for this report:</p> <p>Individual incentives would have their own assessments as required.</p>
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Other</b>	n/a

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Report to Staff Governance Committee 22 April 2024 - [Workforce Deep Dive – Approach to workforce capacity and hard to fill roles](#)
- 10.2 [Report to Staff Governance Committee 22 April 2024 – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)
- 10.3 [Employers: what is positive action in the workplace? | EHRC \(equalityhumanrights.com\)](#)  
<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/guidance/business/employers-what-positive-action-workplace?return-url=https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/search?keys=positive+action>

## 11. APPENDICES

**Appendix A:** Summary of actions taken to improve diversity in recruitment, including leadership and management roles

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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## Appendix A: Summary of actions taken to improve diversity in recruitment, including leadership and management roles

Improving diversity in recruitment is just one aspect of the broader efforts needed to enhance diversity at the leadership level; a holistic approach to the entire employee lifecycle and a thorough analysis of the steps taken are essential. Therefore a summary is provided below detailing the results of a self-assessment undertaken against guidance provided by the Scottish Government<sup>2</sup>. This will be updated and progress against ongoing actions reported in our Equalities Mainstreaming report in early 2025, with a clear EDI Action Plan for the next four years which will seek to address gaps identified in the self-assessment, and through engagement with Equality Working Groups.

SG RECOMMENDATION	WHAT WE HAVE DONE	WHAT WE ARE DOING NEXT
<b>Consider available sources of quantitative and qualitative data to get a comprehensive picture of how staff are represented and how they feel about working in the organisation.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Poster campaign on self-identification of diversity information leading to 24% engagement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Utilise 2024 census data as part of 2025 Mainstreaming report</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Further comms campaigns to encourage employees to self-disclose their diversity information to improve our data</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Gathering insight into employee lived experience through Equal Opportunities Monitoring in employee surveys – next one due winter 2024/25.</li> </ul>
<b>Utilise voice of lived experience to identify barriers and challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Integrated Impact Assessment template updated and training rolled out to officers across 2024, with clear direction that consultation and engagement required with both citizens and employees.</li> <li>✓ <a href="#">Diversity blogs published on intranet</a></li> <li>✓ Equality Working Groups in place and effectively utilised for engagement on corporate campaigns and policies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> IIA updated to include Consumer Duty and Sustainability Impacts. Further training with all stakeholders scheduled.</li> </ul>
<b>Analyse and assess data to identify any inequality in outcome between different groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Gender Pay Gap SPI submitted for 2024</li> <li>✓ Collaborated with Data &amp; Insights to establish PowerBI dashboards with dynamic data to show workforce equality data.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Disability Pay Gap and Ethnicity Pay Gap data to be available and published in 2025.</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> [A Fairer Scotland for All: An Anti-Racist Employment Strategy \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

SG RECOMMENDATION	WHAT WE HAVE DONE	WHAT WE ARE DOING NEXT
<b>Engage with other organisations to determine what information already available and avoid repeated asks of those with lived experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Partnerships and regular review meetings in place with equality partners including GREC, AbleDeen and DeafBlind.</li> <li>✓ Senior leadership support of Disability Equality Partnership meetings and Equality Participation Networks</li> <li>✓ Aberdeen City Council have volunteered for Improvement Service’s pilot group on Pay Gap.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Continue adding value and developing networks and partnerships.</li> </ul>
<b>Work across sector/locale to share and learn practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Collaborating and sharing best practice with colleagues in other local authorities as part of our Society of Personnel and Development (SPDS) professional networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Continuing to collaborate and sharing best practice with colleagues in other local authorities as part of our Society of Personnel and Development (SPDS) professional networks</li> </ul>
<b>Assess the impact of action taken to understand effectiveness</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Analysis and impact to be reported in 2025 Equalities Mainstreaming Report</li> </ul>
<b>Branding and communication in advance of a recruitment campaign</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Promote our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion on our website and on the myjobscotland website where all our vacancies are advertised.</li> <li>✓ Developed an Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Recruitment Pack that sets out our commitment to welcoming and celebrating diversity and provides potential applicants with information about their entitlements and also any adaptations to selection processes that can be requested.</li> <li>✓ Pledges clearly advertised on our MyJobScotland pages for Disability Confident, Carer Positive, Armed Forces Friendly, Young Person’s Guarantee.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Develop our social media promotion of equality, diversity, inclusion and recruitment.</li> <li>☐ Developing promotional material to promote Aberdeen as a city to live and work – and attract candidates on a nationally.</li> </ul>
<b>Accessible language in advertised vacancies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Our application portal, MyJobScotland, has accessibility features that provide support to applicants with visual impairments.</li> <li>✓ Recruitment and Selection training for managers covers equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the recruitment process, including using inclusive advert wording.</li> </ul>	



SG RECOMMENDATION	WHAT WE HAVE DONE	WHAT WE ARE DOING NEXT
<b>Target marketing and recruitment campaigns to attract minorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Attend careers fairs to promote our wide range of employment opportunities, tap into the rich diversity of children and young people, and engage with people to present Aberdeen City Council as employer of choice for those who may experience barriers to employment.</li> <li>✓ Promoting vacancies on Social Media to increase the reach of candidates.</li> <li>✓ Posting vacancies on University Jobs Boards to increase the reach of candidates.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop our social media promotion of equality, diversity, inclusion and recruitment.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sharing our vacancies with a wider range of Universities across Scotland and the UK.</li> </ul>
<b>Flexible working</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A wide range of flexible working options available to employees across the organisation as set out within our Smarter Working Guidance</li> <li>✓ Flexible Working is promoted on Myjobscotland on all our vacancies.</li> <li>✓ Introduced advertising vacancies as having flexible working options, including hybrid, which may widen the candidate pool</li> <li>✓ A wide range of family friendly policies / entitlements available to employees across the organisation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Smarter Working policy currently under review</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Family Friendly policies under review</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> In our promotion of vacancies, highlight if the role has the ability to work flexibly, including hybrid, to potentially increase the candidate pool.</li> </ul>
<b>Commitment to diversity and inclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ EDI policy updated in 2024.</li> <li>✓ Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is a mandatory training course for all employees.</li> <li>✓ Online training courses for employees including gender equality, introduction to faith inclusion and unconscious bias.</li> <li>✓ Set out our commitments to equality, diversity and inclusion as an employer on our webpages on the myjobscotland website.</li> <li>✓ Developed an equality, diversity and inclusion recruitment pack to set out our commitment to welcoming and celebrating diversity and to provides potential applicants with information about their</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Update our mandatory ED&amp;I training for all employees</li> </ul>

SG RECOMMENDATION	WHAT WE HAVE DONE	WHAT WE ARE DOING NEXT
	<p>entitlements and also any adaptations to selection processes that can be requested.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ We have a number of guaranteed interview schemes that may be applicable to potential applicants.</li> <li>✓ Equality, diversity and inclusion, including unconscious bias is part of the Recruitment and selection training for managers.</li> </ul>	
<b>Anonymised applications and short-listing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Our application forms do not ask applicants for their first name or date of birth to avoid unconscious bias</li> <li>✓ Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, including Unconscious Bias is part of the Recruitment and Selection Training for Managers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Explore any additional training needs for recruiting managers.</li> </ul>
<b>Establishing and supporting staff networks – support staff to share and voice concerns and experiences and be confident that something will be done about it</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Equality Working Groups established</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Continue to engage effectively with groups and identify additional future groups that could be supported.</li> </ul>
<b>Raising awareness of harm and implications of hate crime – calling out bullying, harassment, microaggressions and casual remarks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Chief Exec blog raising awareness of domestic abuse and encouraging colleagues to support their peers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Zero Tolerance policy and associated comms campaign to follow in winter 2024.</li> </ul>
<b>Increase leadership messaging that challenges discrimination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Chief Exec blog encouraging colleagues to report hate crime and pledging support for whistleblowing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Communications campaign, shaped around our Guiding Principles, with sponsorship from senior leadership.</li> </ul>
<b>Providing relevant training to deal effectively with incidents of bullying and harassment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Dignity and Respect at Work Policy and guidance for managers on how to approach bullying and harassment in the workforce, and signpost to our employee assistance programme.</li> <li>✓ Dedicated People &amp; OD Adviser to support managers on a case by case basis.</li> <li>✓ A number of relevant online training courses on ACCLearn</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Update training for managers to align with updated EDI policy.</li> </ul>
<b>Embedding trauma-informed and responsive practice in the workplace.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Trauma-informed capability introduced for all job families.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Trauma-informed training officer role under development</li> </ul>

SG RECOMMENDATION	WHAT WE HAVE DONE	WHAT WE ARE DOING NEXT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Trauma-informed training programme available for all employees.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Use positive action measures to address under-representation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Aspiring Senior Leaders programme delivered in 2023</li> <li>✓ Aspiring Leaders recruitment campaign to identify future People Managers for 2024 is now underway.</li> <li>✓ Accelerator scheme in place for all leadership and management programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Increase awareness of Accelerator scheme as available for all development opportunities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Work to ensure that policies and processes are impact assessed and considered in terms of the impact on minoritised staff and service users</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Equality Working Groups and Equality Ambassadors engaged as part of all and any people policy reviews.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Focus on addressing occupational segregation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Embedded as part of Cluster People Development Plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Further analysis and reporting to be undertaken as part of Equality Mainstreaming Report in 2025</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fair Work policy context and legislation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Fair Work First statement and evidence published on website.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Work with partners to establish senior leadership networks across the economy to build capability and understanding of racism and racial inequality and intersectionality</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ North East Public Sector Equalities group established – bringing together EDI specialists from public sector organisations in Aberdeen.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Continue to develop network</li> </ul>

