



Adult Social Care and Health

Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

**Delivery Action Plan and Impact Indicators
2024-2025**



Introduction

Actions and change are needed to achieve the ASCH Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy – its vision, objectives and four priorities. A summary of the key milestones in the action plan is set out in Figure 1.

We will create impact indicators to track ASCH's progress in improving equality, diversity and inclusion in the first 6 months of the implementation of this Action Plan. The revised version of this Action Plan will then have responsible officers, timeframes and impact indicators included.

The action plan and set of impact indicators will be designed to do the following:

- Improve engagement with different groups in the county and build diverse needs and interests into policy design, service delivery and communications
- Create greater transparency and equality in outcomes of the performance management system
- Equip all staff, managers and leaders through training, information and highlighting role models to build equality, diversity and inclusion into the work they do and the way they work
- Raise awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion and involve staff through the staff networks, team discussions, Equality Allies, Employee Representation Group and department-wide events
- Build shared responsibility and accountability for achieving improvements by explicitly embedding inclusive leadership into the performance management process and creating team-specific equality and diversity objectives
- Embed equality, diversity and inclusion into recruitment and other HR functions
- Achieve equality, diversity and inclusion improvements through overall accountability for delivering the ASC strategy

Objectives and Actions

Priority 1: Delivering leadership on equality and demonstrating commitment

Impact statement - Everyone knows that equality diversity and inclusion is inherent in our work and we can see this reflected in departmental culture and in our Quality Assurance mechanisms.

Objectives	Actions
1. Improved EDI focus in decision-making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All decision-making processes like PIDs and DMT papers will have an embedded Equalities Considerations with a grid on impact considered on people from protected characteristics and to share what engagement has taken place on the project/policy.• Agendas for all leadership, operational managers, and teams' meetings will have EDI as a standard item to discuss.• All managers will receive appropriate EDI training and complete Working Inclusively self-assessment.
2. Use of EDI messages in leadership communication with staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supporting equality in the workplace will be seen as the responsibility of all leaders and managers.• EDI messages will be delivered in all our staff engagement sessions and all opportunities will be taken to communicate such messages to teams, e.g. through BE and TTP.

<p>3. Completion and annual review of LGA Diverse by Design self-assessment by leadership.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ownership of actions emanating from Diverse by Design assessment. • Implementation of actions across Divisions and revision of self-assessment every three years.
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Priority 2: Engaging effectively with residents to make improvements

Impact statement – Service design will be inclusive by design and will reflect flexible approaches to ensure services meet the needs of all people. Our feedback from clients, carers and partners will be evident in how we have identified priorities and made decisions.

Objectives	Actions
<p>4. Completion of feedback loop with residents, staff and strategic partners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading on developing a council-wide community engagement framework, which describes and puts into practice completion of feedback loop when we engage and consult, telling people what we do with their feedback and how services change and emerge as we hear from them. • Supporting implementation of Social Care Future approach to co-production across the department. • Ensuring our actions from the seldom heard people and communities report and recommendations are implemented and shared with partners.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting annually in a 'you said, we did' format on our engagement and consultation activities.
<p>5. Improved reporting on Equality Impact Analysis and use of data and feedback.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publishing summary of Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) for accountability. • Follow up on EqIA action plans annually and provide annual report.
<p>6. Strengthening strand-based engagement and consultation, specifically focusing on strengthening our engagement with older people and developing our engagement on race and ethnicity, faith and religion and LGBTQ+ communities, carers and people living in rural areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening our engagement with older people in collaboration with East Sussex Seniors' Association and other partners to ensure we are engaging effectively with a cross-section of people from the older demographic. • Supporting with the implementation of actions from the LGBTQ+ Needs Assessment undertaken in 2021. • Engaging better with people from rural communities to understand their concerns and issues, and address them where possible. • Supporting the implementation of the forthcoming Carers Partnership Plan.

Priority 3: Delivering quality services that reflect the diverse needs of local people

Impact Statement - Provision of services is the best it can be for everyone irrespective of their background, and those at risk of unmet needs can draw on our care and support and feel able to give us feedback and engage with us.

Objectives	Actions
<p>7. Improved use of data collection and analysis, and insight, to identify any inequalities of experience or outcomes, or groups at risk of having unmet needs or poor outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDI dashboard that juxtaposes our client/carer information with our population to get a comprehensive picture of gaps in meeting needs, satisfaction and outcomes. • Collection of data at all levels of service and support – assessments, short-term support, complaints and feedback to get a full picture of people at risk of having unmet needs and ensuring mitigations can be put in place to bridge the gaps. • Utilising EDI Data from commissioned services, where possible, to give us a full picture of use of services and thereby identifying any gaps. • Ensuring staff are aware of groups at risk of having unmet needs or poor outcomes in East Sussex, through Seldom Heard awareness-raising and training and through a clear and informative data picture.
<p>8. Working with teams across the department to use data and insights to reduce inequalities of experience or outcomes wherever possible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a structured approach to working with individual teams on potential inequality of experience or risk of poor outcomes. • Supporting the design and development of specific improvement projects as needed, to seek to mitigate against people at risk of unmet needs and poor outcomes for people whom we seldom hear from. • Obtaining and sharing general and specific insight on those at risk of having unmet needs or poor outcomes, and supporting teams with any subsequent improvement work required to reduce those risks, including identifying metrics to evidence this.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring communication about ASCH care and support services is in plain English and widely available and understood. • Asking EDI questions in the ASC Survey and analysing results to formulate actions which can help improve outcomes for people from different protected characteristics, particularly those at risk of having unmet needs.
<p>9. All our improvement projects will have an EDI lens to ensure people’s protected characteristics and identities are considered.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring, in the forthcoming Quality Assurance Framework Project, that we are considering how we can reflect that our practice adapts to a resident’s protected characteristics. • Ensuring all our projects set up to improve quality of support and care have an EDI focus to complement our strengths-based practice. • Ensuring any substantial changes to service provision are supported by expert EqIA knowledge that results in meaningful understanding of impact.
<p>Priority 4: Building a diverse workforce with equality confidence, knowledge and skills</p> <p>Impact statement – All our staff will feel like they belong and that they are accepted for who they are. This will impact positively on recruitment and retention. Actively demonstrate strengths-based practice at its core with a kind and communicative workforce.</p>	
<p>Objectives</p>	<p>Actions</p>

<p>10. Building an inclusive workforce which fosters a culture of respect and ensures our people feel safe and that they belong.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attracting, retaining, and developing a diverse workforce with different experiences, skills, and backgrounds, including a close reflection of the communities we serve. ● Conducting staff surveys to gauge their responses on safety, identity and belonging. ● Tackling violence, harassment and discrimination towards staff with measures already identified in that workstream. ● Ensuring appropriate staff networks are available for staff to link in with. We will build on the Race Equality Staff Network and will work towards a council-wide new staff network to support new parents.
<p>11. Developing and empowering our people to design and deliver inclusive and accessible services, removing internal and external institutional barriers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Empowering all colleagues and services to use their influence to advance and promote equality, diversity, and inclusion across the department and work together to make council-wide impact to progress our equality objectives. ● Strengthening our Equality Allies Network to ensure our EDI messages can be spread throughout the department and that there is a culture of Inclusion by Design in the planning, delivery and commissioning of care and support services.
<p>12. Ensuring our staff team feel confident in EDI issues and language.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conducting a training needs analysis to ensure we can develop and deliver the right training to ensure everyone is upskilled and is EDI-confident. ● Ensuring Working Inclusively guidance is used to create equality objectives for individuals and teams.

Implementation of this plan

To deliver this action plan effectively, it is important for all staff to understand clearly their role in the delivery of equality and diversity-related activity and feel confident in embedding equality considerations in all they do.

The ASCH Performance Board has overall responsibility for the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and ensuring adequate resources are provided for its implementation.

The DMT is responsible for overseeing implementation of and monitoring progress in delivering the Action Plan. Operational Directors or Heads of Service must authorise completed Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) when reviewing how a department's functions are delivered, or when they develop new or review existing policies or strategies.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that all aspects of their services comply with the strategy, and that all staff are trained and informed of their responsibility towards the promotion of equality. Managers are also responsible for creating an inclusive workplace culture in which all staff can thrive and reach their potential.

The Equality and Inclusion team is responsible for advising on diversity and equality issues across the department and supporting managers to ensure these are reflected in strategy and policy development, and service improvements. This team will also be monitoring progress against the Action Plan and report to the Performance Board.

All staff must ensure fairness towards colleagues, service users and other members of the community in carrying out their duties. All staff should help to promote the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy in the workplace in all aspects of service delivery, and to work towards the elimination of discrimination. All staff have a duty to report instances of discrimination to their manager at the earliest opportunity so that appropriate action can be taken to remedy the situation. ASCH requires those who provide services on its behalf to ensure their service provision, and employment practices, are consistent with this strategy.