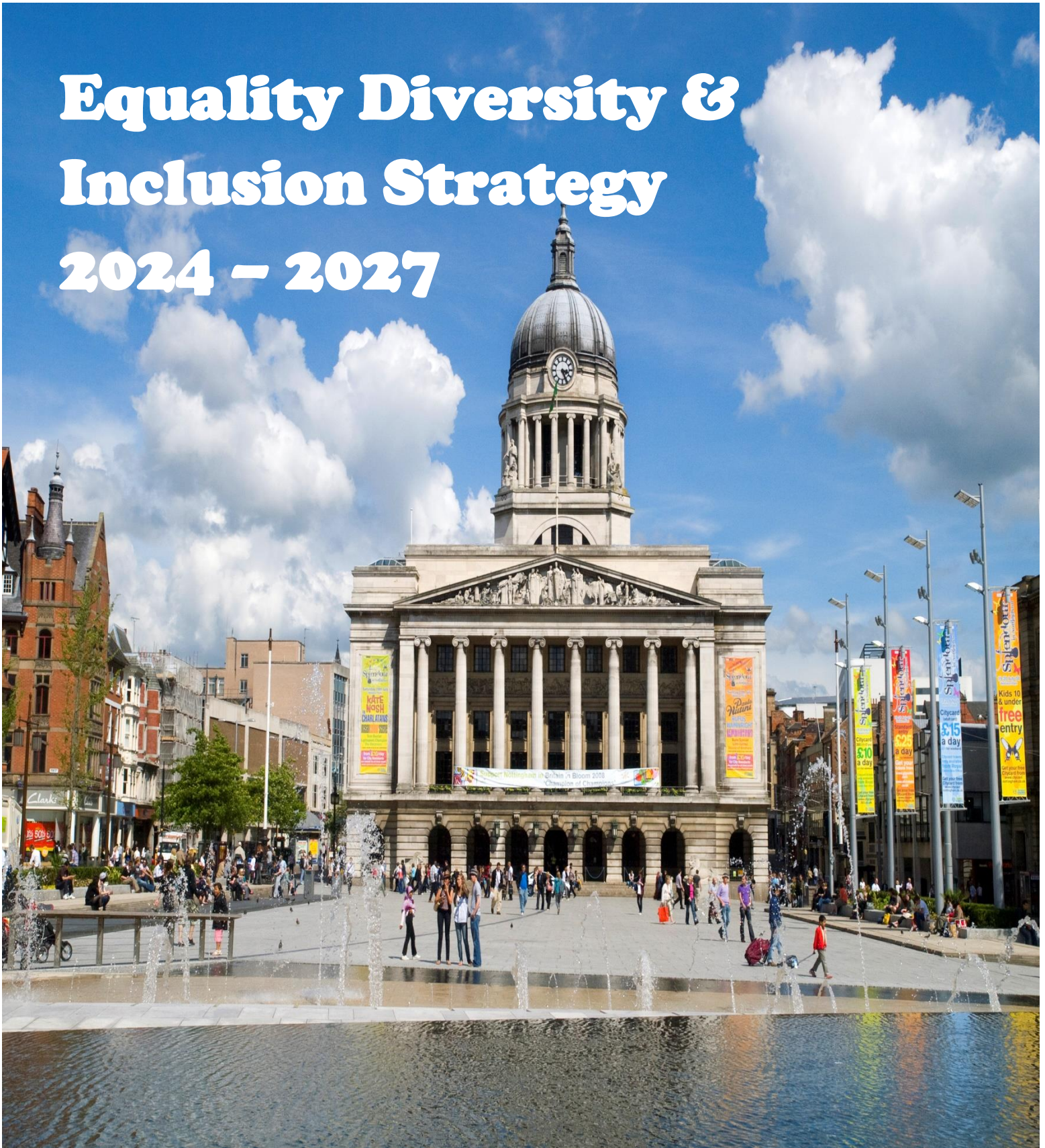


Equality Diversity & Inclusion Strategy 2024 – 2027



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Foreword

This new strategy demonstrates our continued commitment to tackling inequality and promoting diversity and within this document, we outline our clear vision for an inclusive Council. This vision is built on Nottingham City Council's Strategic Council Plan and Strategic Equality Objectives, with robust Equality Action plans through which we will embrace diversity, attract and retain the best staff and provide the most accessible services to our citizens.

We are committed to achieving diversity and equality of opportunity both as a large employer of people and as a provider and commissioner of services. In practice this means both working to ensure that Nottingham is free from discrimination, but also doing what we can to positively promote equality and diversity across the delivery of services and within our workforce.

We acknowledge that there is more to do in tackling prejudice and inequalities and that we can never be complacent about this. We recognise that racism and hate crime are still an ugly part of our society. Against a background of tough economic times and a changing demography we need to be even more aware of the diverse needs of communities and how we can support them.

As a Council, we have also pledged our ongoing support to the ethnic minority, Disabled, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT+) community and will continue to demonstrate this in our employment policies and practices, across our senior leadership and the ways in which we will engage with communities in the future.

We recognise that all people are individual, and that their needs can be complex and varied. We are confident that this strategy sets out how we aspire to achieve real and lasting progress for diverse groups and individuals alongside everyone else in Nottingham over the next few years, but represents only a small portion of the work we will do day-to-day on this agenda.

Nottingham City Council faces a very serious financial challenge over the coming years, and unprecedented changes to the context in which we operate. Nonetheless, we remain ambitious and will continue to strive to deliver for the city and people of Nottingham. We will continue to seek every opportunity for increased funding and improve our partnerships with key organisations, including the East Midlands Combined County Authority which we have created with our partner councils. We will do more to facilitate conversations, broker agreements and convene partners and stakeholders in the wider interests of the city. We celebrate our diversity. Our commitment to Nottingham and local people is undimmed.

Leader of the Council

Chief Executive

Portfolio holder

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) commitments

In February 2024, the Government announced that the Secretary of State would appoint Commissioners to Nottingham City Council for two years. Statutory Intervention through Commissioners is a very significant step and will require a revised Nottingham City Council Improvement Plan that sets out a range of key deliverables that will demonstrate how the Council will improve over the next two years.

We will continue to place people at the centre of what we do, but it is clear to us that the way in which we do it must change. We will reshape the organisation and redesign how we deliver our services, ensuring that our statutory duties are met while finding a more efficient way to deliver for our People, our Neighbourhoods and our City. Our current financial situation means that we have to prioritise the statutory services that keep people safe while we seek to bridge our funding gap.

During the course of these changes, we will consider the needs of vulnerable groups and those who are most likely to be disproportionately impacted. We will carry out robust equality impact assessments and continue to ensure that we do all we can to reduce and mitigate the negative impacts on protected groups where possible.

Equality, diversity and inclusion underpins delivery of key Council strategies. It reinforces the actions and aspirations of the organisation and everyone – our stakeholders, employees, leaders and Councillors – recognise its value and how important it is in attracting the best people to work with us, retaining our staff and in providing the most accessible services to our citizens

Developing this strategy

This strategy has been developed in line with our refreshed Strategic Council Plan (2024) and organisation values. It also considers the challenges we face during the current context of our financial and organisational improvement plan and the impacts this may have on equality, diversity and inclusion. We have consulted widely and invited a wide range of partners, staff and stakeholders to comment on our strategy. The findings of this consultation along with an external EDI audit have shaped this strategy.

Context and Legislation

The main provisions of the Equality Act 2010 provide the basic framework of protection against discrimination, harassment and victimisation, for the nine recognised ‘protected characteristics’ in employment, public functions and services, transport, premises, education, and associations. This Act provides the prime legislative basis under which this strategy operates.

Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 introduced the term “protected characteristics” to refer to groups that are protected under the Act.

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| ◆ Age | ◆ Religion or Belief | ◆ Sex |
| ◆ Marriage/ Civil Partnership | ◆ Disability | ◆ Gender Reassignment |
| ◆ Race | ◆ Maternity and Paternity | ◆ Sexual Orientation |

Nottingham City Council passed its motion to consider Care Experience as a protected characteristic in January 2023.

Public Sector Equality duty

The public sector equality duty is laid out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It states that a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to: -

- a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act.
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it.
- c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

Gender Pay Gap

Legislation came into effect in 2017 requiring employers to publish figures on their gender pay gap. We use our data on a yearly basis to continually review all areas of the organisation to identify the barriers (and the drivers) for appointing women, particularly at senior levels. Our current gender pay gap analysis shows a mean pay gap of 1% and a median gap of minus 1.7% (2022-23).

Ethnicity, Disability and Sexuality Pay Gap

Following the 2017 McGregor-Smith² review, the government has not yet made it mandatory to report on the ethnicity pay gap (publishing pay differentials between people from different ethnic backgrounds). We are committed to improving the ethnic diversity of our workforce and as such we continue to mirror the gender pay gap formula to put measures in place for addressing any pay inequality in terms of ethnicity. We continue to do the same analysis on disability and sexual orientation.

Read our collective pay gap reports [here](#)

Modern Slavery Act 2015

Legislation requires us to prepare and publish a slavery and human trafficking statement each financial year and to tackle slavery wherever we find it. We recognise the responsibility to understand any potential modern slavery risks related to our services, and to explore what steps we can take to ensure there is no slavery or human trafficking in our business or supply chains. Read our Modern Slavery Statement for 2023 [here](#)

Frameworks and charters

We use several equality frameworks and charters to help structure our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion. This supports us in measuring our progress whilst keeping up to date with best practice.

We achieved Disability Confident Leader status in 2022 and gained the Stonewall LGBT Inclusive Employer Silver Award 2023. We continue working towards the seven calls of action for the Race at Work Charter.

Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG)

The purpose of the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG) is to help Local Authorities review and improve their performance for people with characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010.

The EFLG has four improvement modules:

1. Understanding and Working with Communities
2. Leadership and Organisational Commitment
3. Responsive Services and Customer Care
4. Diverse and Engaged Workforce

We will use the findings from the EFLG self-assessment to measure our objectives set out in this strategy.



Key Facts about the Citizens of Nottingham

- ❖ The latest estimate of the City's resident population is **323,700 (Census 2021)**
- ❖ The City continues to see a large amount of population 'churn', with 32,300 people arriving from elsewhere within the UK and 34,500 leaving in the year 2019 - 2020.
- ❖ International migration (recently from Eastern Europe) and an increase in student numbers are the main reasons for the population growth since 2001, together with the excess of births over deaths.
- ❖ Just under 30% of the population are aged 18 to 29. **20.7 % (69,100)** of the population are aged 0-17 years old.
- ❖ Full-time university students comprise about 1 in 7 of the population.
- ❖ In the short to medium term, the City is unlikely to follow the national trend of seeing large increases in the number of people over retirement age, although the number aged 85+ is projected to increase.
- ❖ The number of births has risen in recent years until 2011 but the numbers have slowly declined since then.
- ❖ The 2021 Census shows 42.7% of the population as being from black and ethnic minority groups; an increase from 35% in 2011. 43.3% are working age 16-64)
- ❖ Despite its young age-structure, Nottingham has a higher than average rate of people with a limiting long-term illness or disability.
- ❖ 2018-20 Life expectancy in Nottingham is significantly lower than the England average, with approximately 3 years less for men and 2 years less for women (Nottingham: 76.6 men; 81.0 women. England: 79.4 men; 83.1 women).
- ❖ 45.1% (56,315) of households owned the accommodation they lived in, lower than the England average of 61.3%. 25.5% (31,796) were in social rented housing and 28.6% (35,688) private rented – both higher than England (17.1% and 20.5%)
- ❖ There are many languages spoken including English (68.7%) Urdu (5.7%) Polish (4.2%) Punjabi (2.6%) Arabic (2.4%) Romanian (1.3%). 7.8% of households have no members who speak English as a main language.
- ❖ **69.6%** (231,600) are working age, 16-65 years old, and **11.6%** (38,800) are over 65 years old. (Mid-Year Estimates 2019)
- ❖ There were 164,628 women (50.9% of the population) and 159,004 men (49.1%) in Nottingham. The split is almost identical to the national average and is the same for working age (16-64).
- ❖ There are **43,300** university students within Nottingham.
- ❖ Nottingham's employment rate is **75.0%** (Apr 2020 - March 2021 - NOMIS). This is the number of people that are employed as a percentage of all those that are working age, i.e. 16-64 years old.
- ❖ 225,477 people (85.3%) identified as straight or heterosexual (93% are working age 16-64)
- ❖ 12,929 people (4.9%) identified with an LGB+ orientation “Gay or Lesbian”, “Bisexual” or “Other sexual orientation” (6.2% are working age 16-64)
- ❖ 18.6% of the population are disabled under the Equality Act with 17.7% being of working age 16-64

Source: ONS 2021 Census,

Nottingham City Council workforce data March 31st 2024

- ❖ 21.5 % of our workforce are from Black, Asian or other ethnic minority background
- ❖ 57.8% of our workforce are women.
- ❖ % of our workforce are LGBT+
- ❖ 6.2% of our workforce are disabled

Our employees are our most valuable asset. We are committed to leading the city by example by working towards a workforce that represents the city. We want to build a workforce that is fully representative of the communities we serve so that we can realise the business benefits that this will bring in terms of increased innovation, improved team dynamics and a better understanding of issues that affect all citizens.

The Council encourages a culture of trust and open communication between employees and between employees and their managers, to ensure that concerns arising during the course of their employment can be resolved quickly, fairly and amicably.

The Council will not tolerate any form of harassment, discrimination, victimisation, and bullying and will take decisive action against those found to be responsible for such behaviour. Similarly, the Council does not expect any employee or worker engaged in activities for the Council to harass, discriminate, victimise or bully anyone else, whether a colleague, visitor or member of the public. The Council will take action to address this, which could result in disciplinary action and potentially dismissal and/or legal action, where the behaviour is unlawful.

The Resolution and Grievance Procedure is the Council's process for managing employee concerns, conflict or grievances at work. The stages of the procedure have been designed to help managers and employees resolve concerns in line with *the [ACAS Code of Practice 1: Disciplinary and Grievance procedures](#)*.

The Council wants to ensure that all employees have fair and equal access to all policies and procedures relating to their work. It is important that employees ask for assistance at the point at which they raise their concerns, if they have any specific needs that would help them to participate fully. This could include, for example, access and mobility issues in relation to the location of meetings, format of correspondence, etc. They can discuss their needs confidentially with their manager, who will assist them.

The City's challenges and their impact on equality, diversity and inclusion

Cost of Living Crisis & Poverty

We continue to feel the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, cost of living crisis, and significant funding reductions from central Government. At the same time, the need for our demand-led services including adult social care and children's services has never been higher, while our financial resilience has been reduced through correcting the mistakes we have made in the past.

The rising cost of living is not impacting on everyone equally. People who are already experiencing inequity and poverty will be disproportionately impacted. This particularly applies to People on the lowest incomes, Parents and young families, Disabled people, Black, Asian and Minoritised Ethnic groups, Social and private renters, Households with pre-payment energy meters, and Women.

These experiences are likely to intersect. People's multiple and overlapping identities and circumstances might come together to contribute to an overall (and compounded) experience of poverty and disadvantage.

One of the most common measures of deprivation is the Indices of Multiple Deprivation which applies weightings to different themes (housing, health and well-being, education and skills, income deprivation, crime). Nottingham has high levels of deprivation and ranks 11th out of the 317 districts in England using the average score measure.

Council Budget Reductions

Significant savings will be delivered in 2024/25 and these savings, based on delivering statutory minimum service standards, are reflected in this plan and will alter what we can deliver. We face some very difficult decisions which we must make to get our finances onto a stable and sustainable footing.

We must change how we work; reshaping or reducing the services we provide so that the Council is financially sustainable in the long-term. Over the next few years, these decisions will create a very different Council. In due course this plan will be subject to further review and change to reflect the significant anticipated budget gap over the period of the plan which will require additional savings to be found so that our priority actions remain aligned with the resources that we have available.

Our Vision

Our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) strategy is key to achieving our ambition of being an inclusive Council.

Equality, diversity and inclusion underpins delivery of key Council strategies. It reinforces the actions and aspirations of the organisation and everyone – our stakeholders, employees, leaders and Councillors – recognise its value and how important it is in attracting the best people to work with us, retaining our staff and in providing the best and most accessible services to our citizens.

We are committed to improving the lives of people living and working in Nottingham and are working hard to ensure that everyone has fair and equitable access to both opportunities and services.

We will apply the principles of equality, diversity, fairness and inclusion in our decision making, in how we recruit and support our workforce and to the services we commission and deliver to our local residents. We will work with partners across the public, private and voluntary sector, with local organisations who are supporting individuals and communities, and with organisations who are providing services on behalf of the Council.



Outcome 1

An Inclusive and representative workforce

Create inclusive workplaces where employees can bring their whole selves to work and thrive, aspire to represent the diversity of the City that we serve

Current and Future Focus

- ✓ We will continue to address the Council's gender, race and disability pay gaps
- ✓ Identify ways of supporting career progression to diversify our leadership including how effectively we make reasonable adjustments for disabled colleagues and accommodate colleagues to combine work and family or caring responsibilities
- ✓ Inclusive Leadership behavior is embedded through IPRs and training, with specific emphasis on the employee life cycle, aiming to create inclusive practices in recruitment, talent development, performance management and retention.
- ✓ Creating a workforce plan for every service area whilst ensuring service reviews don't disproportionately affect under-represented groups
- ✓ Provision of information at both application and induction stage about the Council's inclusion commitments and available support
- ✓ Provide tailored mental health and wellbeing support services to all colleagues
- ✓ Review how recruitment processes operate in practice to better understand why some groups, are proportionately less likely to succeed in getting jobs than other groups
- ✓ Continued work on our Culture Change project with a focus on cultural intelligence and psychological safety
- ✓ We will continue to explore reasons behind grievances and disciplinary actions and take appropriate action to deal with any equality issues identified
- ✓ We will ensure compliance with a zero-based tolerance of discriminatory practice in NCC
- ✓ Provide development opportunities to underrepresented groups within NCC, designed to attract, develop and retain diverse talent. Review and refresh of existing programmes to achieve best value in delivery.
- ✓ Implementation of staff networks improvement plan with a focus on lived experience and engaging frontline colleagues

Outcome 2

Inclusive and accessible services for citizens
 Provide services which actively addresses inequality and exclusion

Current and Future Focus

- ✓ Work with services to map barriers that protected groups may encounter when using their service
- ✓ Review of accessibility for all Council buildings including disabilities, neurodiversity, and cultural differences
- ✓ Review cultural training for all staff, particularly those in customer-facing roles, to identify gaps in current training and how it can be improved.
- ✓ We have passed motion to consider Care Experience as a protected characteristic
- ✓ Improve access to occupational therapy, equipment and adaptations enhancing preventative opportunities and promoting independence to allow people to continue to live in their own homes.
- ✓ Develop inclusive and tailored communications approaches aimed at specific protected groups
- ✓ Continue to strengthen EDI principles in Decision Making with our Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) improvement project
- ✓ Monitoring protected characteristics of citizens e.g. race, sexuality, age, gender, religion, disability, using Council services to identify gaps in provision or barriers to accessing services
- ✓ Transform the services we provide to vulnerable adults – focusing on prevention and early intervention, providing better outcomes and supporting people to live independently for as long as possible.
- ✓ Develop our community public health function to enhance our understanding of the specific needs of and barriers faced by different groups within Nottingham, and work with communities to address these in the most appropriate way

Outcome 3

An Equitable City

Build good relations between different communities so everyone is able to participate and contribute

Current and Future Focus

- ✓ We will continue to work with local people and our partners in transforming our approach to city leadership via the Together for Nottingham Plan to ensure we are using all the tools available to deliver good outcomes for the people of Nottingham
- ✓ Connecting residents into opportunities within their neighborhood and the city such as learning, education employment and wellbeing activities
- ✓ Work collaboratively with the Integrated Care System (ICS) and other local authorities to address health inequalities across the City in line with the Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy for Nottingham 2022- 2025
- ✓ Work with the Police to implement our Hate Crime Strategy, increasing reporting and reducing repeat incidences of hate crime
- ✓ Tackling longstanding inequalities that significantly and disproportionately impact ethnic minority communities
- ✓ We will take a whole family approach, seeing and understanding people in the round rather than through a particular service's view. Ensuring that we design our services with residents and communities
- ✓ Continue to promote and celebrate Nottingham's diversity and cultural heritage by supporting community-led initiatives, e.g. Black History Month, Disability History Month, Nottinghamshire Pride, South Asian Heritage Month, International Women's Day
- ✓ Data is regularly updated and used to set priorities across the organisation and in different services, by geographical area and by protected and other characteristics such as intersectionality, deprivation etc.
- ✓ Supporting and empowering community groups and collaborating with partners to widen and deepen work to tackle discrimination and to promote equality, diversity and inclusion in the city

Outcome 4

Economic Growth for All

Support the local economy and support citizens and businesses to access good quality learning, progress, upskill and retrain to access employment

Current and Future Focus

- ✓ Continue to support the BAME-led business sector and support local SMEs to enhance their ability to tender and potentially win business.
- ✓ Using procurement opportunities to actively support businesses from communities within each protected characteristic, and scrutinising equalities, diversity, and inclusion policies of potential suppliers to further promote shared values relating to equalities, diversity, and inclusion
- ✓ Secured UK Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF), protecting key Employment Support interventions for priority groups until March 2025. The UK SPF will improve the lives of 31,000 people through jobs and skills support, including priority groups.
- ✓ Ensure the Council's Economic Growth for All priorities are embedded within East Midlands Devolution Deal
- ✓ Seek to reduce the over representation of certain groups within the unemployment figures in the city, such as BAME populations, over 50s and those with disabilities.
- ✓ We will ensure all of our communities benefit from the job opportunities created through economic growth, by supporting those who face most disadvantage in the labor market into work (including Apprenticeships)
- ✓ Work with DWP to secure funding and deliver support under an extended IPS PC programme providing employment support for unemployed/employed people with disabilities.
- ✓ Our devolution deal will help us to create a strong and sustainable economy through; holding the Adult Education Budget for 2025/26, owning the ability to set allocations and outcomes to skills providers, and supporting and shaping the Local Skills Improvement Plan for the area

Governance

The Council's constitutional arrangements will be reviewed to establish where the responsibilities of the Equalities Board would sit.

This will be done as part of the wider review of Committee arrangements. The Committee will be updated when this review has been completed and this section will be updated to reflect those arrangements.

For more information:

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