

# Building a Fairer Oldham

Equality, Diversity and  
Inclusion Strategy

2021 - 2025



**Oldham**  
Council

## **Message from Cllr. Shah, Leader of Oldham Council**

I am delighted to introduce Oldham's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy: 'Building a Fairer Oldham'. Oldham is a vibrant and diverse borough, but not everyone has access to the same opportunities. I believe our town will only fulfil its collective potential if everyone who lives and works here can reach their own individual potential and are not limited because of who they are or where they live.

Working in partnership is core to our approach in Oldham and this strategy recognises that tackling inequality requires the widest possible ownership, engagement and contribution. We need to use all our resources, our creating and commitment if we are to deliver on our shared ambition of a more equitable Oldham; an Oldham where all who live and work comfortably, healthily and happily.

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is an important document setting out our priorities over the coming years as we seek to fundamentally redesign Team Oldham's services, recover from the impact of COVID-19, deliver significant budget cuts and improve outcomes for residents. Our vision is to create a place where people understand, respect and celebrate each other's differences, this strategy sets out the improvements we would like to see and expands on the successful work already happening to tackle unfairness across the borough.

This strategy will build on the hard work and dedication of individuals and organisations that are committed to equality and fairness. It will provide ways for people to share their experiences, good and bad, and to establish systems that concentrate our efforts, knowing that working together will have the greatest impact.

Despite the challenges we face collectively and as individuals, I believe our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and the actions that will be developed under it to meet our equality objectives will have real benefits for Oldham. It is a work of shared values and vision created through listening to our Equality Advisory Group, communities, Voluntary, Community, Faith, and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) partners, stakeholders and staff. We are grateful to everyone who has helped us to shape this strategy so far, and who we will continue to work with to build a fairer Oldham, so nobody is left behind.

This strategy sets out how we plan to achieve these aims by working collaboratively across Team Oldham, as well as showing how we will monitor our progress. I have made a commitment to report on our progress regularly, in order to make sure that there is accountability for the actions that we have said we will take forward. It's important to recognise that this is a living document: as we implement the strategy, working with our communities to deliver the work, the detail and content will adapt and change, reflecting the needs of Oldham's communities and the insights that they bring to inform our approach.

## Introduction to Oldham's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

Our vision is to create a place where people understand, respect and celebrate each other's difference, while tackling the inequalities that exist in health, income and opportunity across the borough. We are committed to creating a place that values and celebrates our differences while promoting equal opportunities for all.

Oldham has a rich history of people from different backgrounds and cultures living and working together. However, we know that there are groups of people that are marginalised, who are more likely to face inequality and discrimination than others. As we recover from the impact of Covid-19 it is critical that we tackle inequality and discrimination head on, setting aspirational targets for improving equality across the borough. Evidence shows us that Covid-19 has impacted disproportionately on our communities from ethnic minority backgrounds; older people and younger people – the latter being particularly affected by rising unemployment; and more generally, people living on low incomes.

We are proud of the work in Oldham to reduce inequalities experienced by individuals and groups of people across Oldham, but we know we can do more. Our policies and strategies aim to capture the lived experiences of our communities and our Equality Strategy reflects their insights and expertise. The purpose of our Equality Strategy is:

- To meet the general and specific requirements of the equality legislation in everything we do so that equality is fully embedded within our organisational culture and reflected in our principles and values.
- To state our commitment to make Oldham a fairer place in which to live, work and feel safe.
- To ensure our workforce are aware and equipped to provide culturally appropriate and inclusive services.
- To address and outline the additional steps we are undertaking to address inequalities as a result of Covid-19 from our initial pandemic response through to our recovery and rebuild phase.
- To implement a programme of activity which supports workforce equality and diversity in a holistic way through the #TeamOldham Workforce Strategy 2020-2023.

We recognise that we have a range of statutory responsibilities, including the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty, and take equality and diversity seriously, but our ambition is to go beyond these obligations and weave equality, diversity and human rights into everything we do to develop a culture of fairness, openness and respect, as defined by our Co-operative values.

We know that there are difficult challenges that lie ahead. Inequalities have been exacerbated in recent times by Covid-19, public sector cuts and different political ideologies. The recent Marmot Review, 'Build Back Fairer in Greater Manchester: Health Equity and Dignified Lives', published 30 June 2021, sets out the devastating impacts of inequalities on our communities. The report shows that the Manchester City Region had a 25% higher COVID-19 death rate than England as a whole in the 13 months to March 2021. This high

death rate contributed to a decline in life expectancy in the North West region, which was larger than the average in England. Life expectancy fell in 2020 by 1.6 years for men and 1.2 years for women in the North West compared 1.3 years and 0.9 years, respectively, across England.

Given all the evidence for the inequalities in risks of mortality from COVID-19, it is essential that all efforts at rebuilding have the goal of greater equity at their heart – so that we can Build Back Fairer and ensure that unfair and unnecessary health inequalities are reduced.

This Strategy will be reviewed regularly to ensure the needs of our communities are being met fairly and equally. Progress will be monitored and reported, with supporting delivery plans developed to accompany each strategic action area, underpinning the delivery of the strategy.

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## **Why do we need an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy in Oldham?**

Society is diverse, with a wide range of differences among people, families and communities. We may be older or younger, have a religious belief or no religious belief, or have a different background. This is a normal part of life.

When we talk about inequality, we mean that people are treated unfairly and less favourably because of these differences and characteristics, real or perceived. Furthermore, equality does not mean that everyone should be treated the same, but that everyone should have an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents. This means removing societal barriers across the borough so that everyone can be involved and feels welcome. It also means recognising that a one size all approach to services doesn't connect with residents needs or achieve the outcomes we want for our communities.

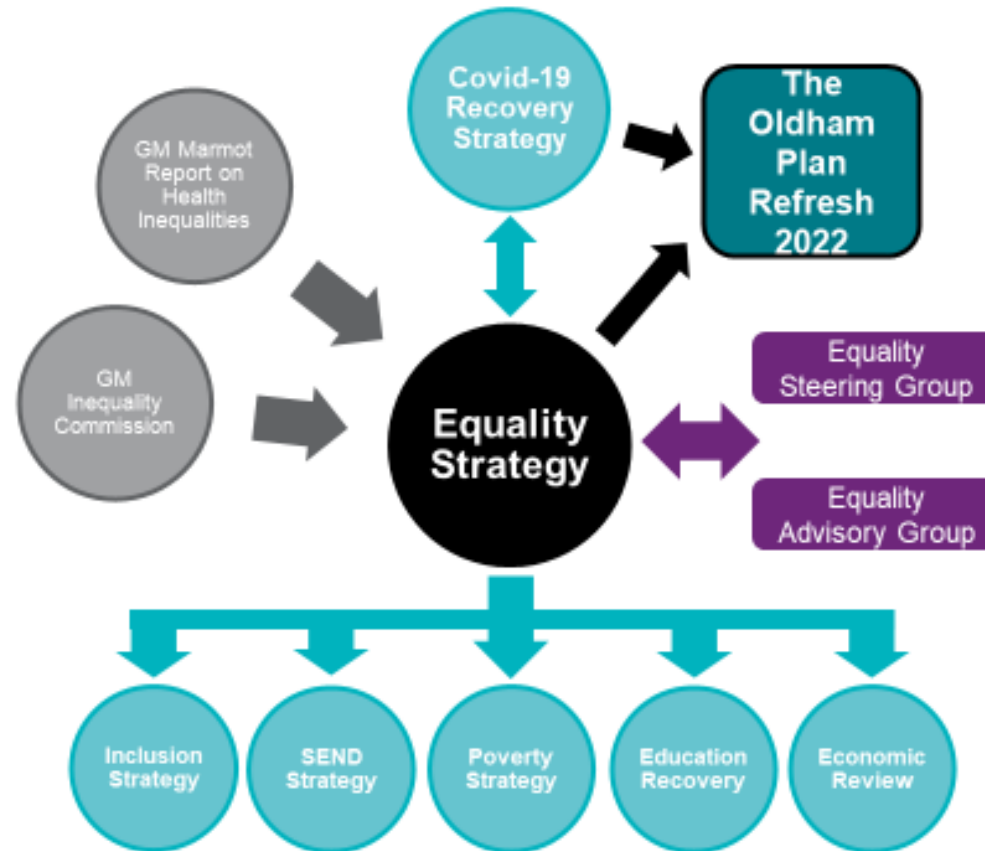
We believe the people of Oldham want to live in a place that is committed to fairness and equality of opportunity, a borough that tackles discrimination and prejudice and that these principles help communities come together and live together harmoniously.

We want to make it possible for everyone to feel that they can make a difference, to open the debate about inequality and unfairness. This strategy brings together key commitments and priorities against which we need to deliver to achieve our collective ambitions. It is everyone's responsibility to make Oldham a fairer place to live in. It is a shared endeavour, involving communities and employers, as well as Team Oldham and our VCFSE partners.

The strategy, whilst ambitious, cannot reflect every inequality which will be experienced over the next 4 years. It sets out key actions across 4 equality objectives. These are:

1. Identify and mitigate the equality impacts of COVID-19, informing our response through research, best practice and lived experience, while supporting the delivery of our Covid-19 Recovery Strategy.
2. Provide services that put the citizens' voice at the heart of decision-making, ensuring our services are inclusive and drive equity.
3. Champion inclusivity across the borough, working with our partners and communities to make Oldham a fairer place for everyone, while valuing and celebrating diversity and inclusion for all.
4. Achieve a skilled and diverse workforce building a culture of equality and inclusion in everything we do.

Progress against the actions, and accountability for wider system change, will be visible through performance measures and action taken through the broader strategic and operational framework of Team Oldham. Please see the diagram below that shows some of the key interconnectivities:



**Equality Objective 1 - Identify and mitigate the equality impacts of COVID-19, informing our response through research, best practice and lived experience, while supporting the delivery of our Covid-19 Recovery Strategy:**

More than ever, as we recover from the impact of COVID-19 it is critical that we continue to tackle inequality and discrimination head on. The COVID-19 pandemic was experienced in significantly different ways across our communities and has exacerbated many pre-existing inequalities, including health and finance. We have seen existing inequalities resulting in people being more at risk of transmission of COVID-19, at risk of poorer outcomes from infection, and at risk of greater impact from control measures. The Marmot Review [‘Build Back Fairer’](#) (January 2021) found shockingly high COVID-19 mortality rates among British people who self-identify as Black, Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Indian, with clear links to the challenges caused by deprivation. The Review also found that Covid-19 and the response to the pandemic has also widened existing inequalities, with more people suffering poorer health outcomes as a result. Public Health England (PHE) have found older people, males, those living in deprived areas, and those from minority ethnicities are at increased risk of poor outcomes. However, it is equally important to note that inequalities are also experienced in relationships between services / organisations – in the assumptions that are made; the language that is used; the way we communicate; and how services are designed and accessed.

The Marmot review [‘Fair Society, Healthy lives’](#) (2010) demonstrated how health inequalities are affected by a wide range of social and economic factors including where we live, our housing, our income, the environment, our relationship with the local community and the lifestyle choices we make. The review considered how health inequalities are an accumulative process with the influences of negative and positive factors beginning at birth and continuing over a person’s life. These factors are now widely accepted as being responsible for significant levels of health inequalities. People living in deprived areas and in the lowest income group are much more likely to have a reduced life expectancy and a poorer health outcome than more affluent people.

Both COVID-19 and the measures to control it have exacerbated the fundamental inequality in death rates between Oldham, GM and the wider North, and the rest of the UK. The Northern Health Science Alliance has found that 12.4 more people per 100,000 population have died with COVID-19 in the North from March to July than elsewhere in the country, with 57.7 more people per 100,000 dying of all causes.

The exacerbation of existing inequalities because of COVID-19 has also resulted in a further deepening and widening of poverty in the borough. Unemployment rates have doubled since March and rates are highest in our most disadvantaged communities. We are especially concerned about the rise in youth unemployment; now approaching 16% borough wide in some hotspots, within our poorer wards, as high as 37%.

We will continue to work across Team Oldham to tackle these inequalities, especially for communities who have been disproportionately hit hardest by the pandemic. Through our Covid Recovery Plan we will take steps to support our most vulnerable communities, protect our health system, and support our economy.

**Equality Objective 2 - Provide services that put the citizens' voice at the heart of decision-making, ensuring our services are inclusive and drive equity:**

How we develop and co-produce services is fundamental to how we meet our equality and diversity responsibilities. The co-design process and decision-making about how we make changes to services is underpinned by principles and approaches that ensure equality and diversity issues are identified and acted on so that residents' needs are met and that they can access services in ways that balance the delivery of effective and efficient services with what suits them.

Good engagement and consultation with residents is key to providing accessible and resident focused services that are co-designed and influenced by the people who will use and benefit from them. When engaging we take care to reach all sections of the community, often using the expertise of the Oldham Partnership, Equality Advisory Group and our VCFSE partners to better understand the impact on people and communities with protected characteristics, helping co-design and develop solutions to the challenges facing these communities.

Our Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process is an essential tool for co-designing services, policies and strategies, and understanding the impact, positive and negative, of our decisions on different protected groups. EIAs are the primary way in which equalities and diversity issues are identified across Team Oldham and they provide a systematic framework and evidence-base to demonstrate that we have considered equalities and diversity in our decision-making processes, as well as evidencing how we will mitigate any identified impacts. We will strengthen our EIA process, firming up our approach to community engagement and inclusive design and co-production, ensuring equality issues are at the heart of Oldham's decision-making approach.

Concerns about the digital divide have been particularly acute during the COVID-19 pandemic as the internet and digital devices have played an important role in allowing people to access services, attend medical appointments and stay in touch with friends and family. Through our Team Oldham Digital Strategy, we are committed to 'delivering a connected Oldham for everyone'. The strategy is deliberately broad in its focus to ensure that we balance delivery of digital infrastructure with designing and delivering digital services that reflect the needs of the people who use them. By understanding resident's needs, services should be designed in a way that makes them easy to use and access 24/7 from the comfort of their own homes. This includes the council website as the 'front door' to digital services meeting accessibility standards and the online customer journey being effective and efficient from start to finish. We are also committed to playing our part to work together with partners to ensure that everyone has the access,



skills and confidence to feel empowered to benefit from the opportunities that digital brings in our day-to-day lives. Access to the digital world should be a basic human right, everyone in Oldham whatever their age, location, or situation, should be able to benefit from the opportunities digital brings, so we will be developing a plan to address the barriers of digital exclusion and the digital divide, in a co-ordinated and focussed way, informed by local needs and sharing learning, resource and expertise.

As a service provider we are working to ensure that the way services are co-designed and delivered take account of the diverse needs of our residents and communities, ensuring our services are accessible to all. We will be undertaking a fundamental review of how we work with residents, developing policies and procedures that support co-design and ensure transparency when delivering services. By promoting fairness and inclusion we will remove barriers to services and opportunities. We will take practical steps to improve the way we provide our services and act to tackle discrimination that affects specific groups. We also have a Public Sector Equality Duty to be able demonstrate to the community how we have considered the impacts of our decisions and what the outcome of these considerations has been. We will continue to publish this information annually through our annual equality report.

**Equality Objective 3 - Champion inclusivity across the borough, working with our partners and communities to make Oldham a fairer place for everyone, while valuing and celebrating diversity and inclusion for all:**

Equality is at the heart of our vision and values and is a part of everything that we do. Oldham has an increasingly diverse population, but inequality continues to affect different people and communities in different ways. We are committed to tackling discrimination and the inequalities which prevent people from fulfilling their true potential.

We know some people face prejudice and discrimination. This can be due to fear, a lack of understanding or because of hatred and intolerance. This may include harassment, hatred or violence and may be linked to homophobia, racism, sexism or transphobia. We recognise that some people express fear, lack of respect and contempt towards people from other groups and communities. As champions of inclusivity, we will take a no-tolerance approach to hate crimes, doing more to enable victims or witnesses to come forward. We must also continue to support victims and ensure that perpetrators face justice. Finally, we must work across Team Oldham and are communities to challenge the attitudes and beliefs that drive these crimes.

Historical and contemporary systemic and institutionalised discrimination and prejudice in the treatment of Black and Asian people, and people belonging to other ethnic minorities, have resulted in entrenched inequalities rooted in long-standing structural issues of poverty and disadvantage. We will work to increase peoples' knowledge and understanding about specific equalities issues. We will focus on promoting positive messages, celebrating equality, diversity and inclusion. We will work with staff, members of the public, service users, community groups and VCFSE partners to achieve this, developing campaigns and initiatives in partnership with

groups and communities with lived experience of protected characteristics. Our goal is to challenge discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and understanding and foster good relations across Oldham's communities.

Building a Fairer Oldham also means recognising that there are other causes of inequality or exclusion, often inter-connected and mutually reinforcing. People can be excluded because they have low income, are socially isolated, live in poor housing or due to poor health. Despite the best efforts of Team Oldham, through commitments such as the living wage, Fair Employment Charter and Ethical Framework, poverty and inequality in Oldham have been increasing over the last 10 years and gaps in wealth and health across the borough continue to widen. Pre-Covid19, Oldham's place in the IMD had worsened (19th LA) and the borough continues to have some of the highest rates of child poverty in the country.

We are currently refreshing Oldham's Poverty Action Plan through Oldham's Poverty Steering Group (comprising senior leaders and officers from across the system, to provide strategic oversight and direction), ensuring that it is responsive to the increasing demands placed on services across the system caused by COVID-19. As well as meeting urgent needs now, the plan will begin to look forward to recovery and will have a greater focus on tackling the underlying causes of poverty and inequality. In this respect, the Poverty Action Plan is a pre-cursor to the development of a Poverty Strategy, taking forward key actions now and beginning work at a strategic and operational level that will make our efforts to combat the symptoms and causes of poverty more effective.

#### **Equality Objective 4 – Achieve a skilled and diverse workforce building a culture of equality and inclusion in everything we do:**

The Team Oldham Workforce Strategy ensures that our employment processes and conditions are free from discrimination and that we work towards removing barriers to employment, development and career opportunities for everyone. We are committed to building an inclusive Team Oldham where the workforce reflects the borough we serve and the needs of all citizens, and where colleagues feel confident about being themselves at work.

The profile of the existing Team Oldham workforce does not currently reflect the diversity of our communities and we have recognised that we need to accelerate improvements in this area, especially as one of the borough's largest employers we need to lead by example. To increase the pace of change we are setting ambitious targets and actions to ensure our actions match our ambition. We want to attract people from all backgrounds to work for us, and we want to retain staff by valuing their contribution and supporting them to give their best. Our approach to inclusivity and diversity is at the heart of how we do this. As we need our workforce to understand how to make difference work for all of us. As well as applying fair recruitment practices and tackling barriers to employment, we offer flexible ways of working, family-friendly policies, and learning and development opportunities to

help staff fulfil their potential. We are also committed to tackling the gender pay gap, ensuring everyone is paid fairly and exploring how our working practices can be made more flexible to support women who return to work after having a baby.

The greatest challenges we face to having a diverse workforce is increasing the number of people with disabilities we employ and ensuring good levels of progression for our black and minority ethnic communities. This means we need to have both generic and targeted measures in place to address these challenges. We already ensure that all disabled candidates who meet essential criteria are guaranteed an interview and steps are taken to support people who need adaptations of any nature but there is still work to do and we have an ambitious Apprenticeship and Kick Start programme which aims specifically to offer new opportunities to those people who may not normally look to find employment with us. In respect of people from a Black and Minority Ethnic background our workforce does consist of people from a rich mix of cultures but these staff are predominantly in front line and junior roles and so the challenge is to understand and address how we can be more representative at all levels and create development opportunities which will accelerate progression at a faster pace.

We will continue to promote our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion across Team Oldham so that our actions both within and outside our organisations demonstrate a passion and commitment to create opportunities for all. To further workforce equality across Team Oldham we are committed to participating in the Stonewall UK Workplace Equality Index, measure our progress on lesbian, gay, bi and trans inclusion in the workplace. We are also committed to becoming a Disability Confident accredited employer, making our workplaces more accessible to staff with disabilities.

We are committed to creating an environment where employees feel able to be open about their background, identity and characteristics, if they choose to do so. We will appoint workforce equality champions, ensuring staff with protected characteristics are represented and heard in relation to workforce issues. We expect respect from all and will celebrate differences among the communities we serve and within our own workforce. We will take robust action to ensure Team Oldham provides a working environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and will take action as needs be, both to ensure best practice is applied and to ensure people and organisations are protected.

## Appendix: Equality Action Plan 2021 – 2025

The aim of the Equality Action Plan is to place equality and diversity at the heart of what we do, setting ourselves ambitious goals and measuring progress against these in order to narrow the gaps that exist across the borough.

Whilst the Equality Action Plan articulates our priorities it does not capture everything that we do to address inequality, as the work to address inequalities is reflected in the relevant individual strategies, plans and policies that are in place across Team Oldham. This is a living document. It recognises that Equality and Diversity doesn't stay the same, it changes, Covid-19 has shown us that. This is about ensuring we are doing everything we can, to tackle inequality in all its forms, through all our work. The Equality Action Plan will be updated regularly and overseen by Oldham's Equality Advisory Group and Oldham Council's Equality Steering Group. The current focus of the Action Plan is on the Council, CCG, Unity and parts of Team Oldham, but additional development will deepen this approach across the wider system.

The action plan will continue to be developed with action leads, reflecting the ongoing work to capture the learning from our response to the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as work that is currently being undertaken to map equality impacts across the wider system. This includes the development of a dedicated performance dashboard for equalities, helping us measure how we are tackling inequalities across the borough, Team Oldham's services and our workforce. The detailed supporting delivery plan will be ready September 2021, in advance of the Equality Strategy being submitted to Full Council for adoption.

<b>Equality Strategy: Action Plan 2021 / 2025</b>			
<b>Equality Objective</b>	<b>Key Actions</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Impact</b>
<b><i>Identify and mitigate the equality impacts of COVID-19, informing our response through research, best practice and lived experience, while supporting the delivery of our Covid-19 Recovery Strategy.</i></b>	<p>We will continue to work across Team Oldham, Oldham's Equality Advisory Group and our communities to deliver Oldham's Covid-19 Recovery plan, focused on mitigating the impact of the pandemic across all of Oldham's communities.</p> <p>We will continue to meet with the Equality Advisory Group on a fortnightly basis, capturing community insight and co-developing solutions to the ongoing challenges presented by the pandemic.</p>	<p>Lead - Matthew Drogan, Head of Strategy and Performance</p> <p>Supported by - Team Oldham / Equality Advisory Group / Public Health / Corporate Policy</p>	<p>Learning from the pandemic is embedded in future ways of working.</p>

	<p>Reducing the inequalities created, or that were pre-existing and exacerbated, during the pandemic for people with protected characteristics or other vulnerable groups through Team Oldham's Equality Impact Assessment Process, which will identify potential issues, ensuring appropriate mitigations can be put in place across the wider Team Oldham system.</p> <p>We will update the Covid-19 EIA quarterly, identifying any new or emerging impacts on vulnerable groups or groups with protected characteristics, ensuring appropriate mitigations can be put in place.</p>	<p>Lead - Jonathan Downs, Corporate Policy Lead</p> <p>Lead - Mark Drury, Head of Public Affairs (Oldham CCG)</p> <p>Supported by - Public Health / Adult's Social Care / Children's Social Care / OD</p>	<p>No communities or groups are disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, or the mitigating actions put in place.</p>
	<p>We will continue to address health inequalities which have been further exacerbated by Covid-19, acting to tackle both the underlying causes as well as the negative impacts of health inequalities. This work is reflected in this Strategy as well as other key local strategies and plans including the Poverty Strategy and Covid-19 Recovery Strategy.</p>	<p>Lead - Katrina Stephens, Director of Public Health</p> <p>Supported by - Public Health / Adult's Social Care / Children's Social Care / Equality Advisory Group / Research and Engagement / Social Prescribing Network</p>	<p>No communities or groups are disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, or the mitigating actions put in place.</p>
	<p>Undertake a learning review of our Covid-19 response, including test and trace, vaccination and broader CV-19 engagement activity to help drive how we work together as a system to deliver health, care and other public services more broadly going forward. The initial findings from this work will be published by October 2021.</p>	<p>Lead - Erin Portsmouth, Director of Corporate Affairs (Oldham CCG)</p> <p>Supported by - Oldham CCG / Corporate Policy / OD</p>	<p>Learning from the pandemic is embedded in future ways of working.</p>
	<p>Address and tackle equality issues for those from key ethnic groups and other disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. Providing advocacy for those with English as their second language and finding alternative ways to engage and communicate key messaging to hard to reach communities, for example, through Oldham's Community Champions programme, a project delivered in partnership between</p>	<p>Lead - Neil Consterdine - Assistant Director Youth, Leisure and Communities</p>	<p>People from particular ethnic groups are actively engaged and able to co-design solutions that meet their needs.</p>

	<p>Oldham Council and Action Together, which aims to support people disproportionately impacted by Covid-19, including minority ethnic communities and people with a disability.</p>	<p>Lead - Laura Windsor-Welsh, Strategic Locality Lead (Action Together)</p> <p>Supported by - Equality Advisory Group Supported / Communications Team / Policy Team / Action Together</p>	
	<p>Monitoring and reviewing the potential impacts of the pandemic relating to sex and gender reassignment including access to midwifery and domestic violence support services, ensuring that we are providing the right level of support across Team Oldham. This will include minimising the impact of the pandemic on the LGBTQ+ community, ensuring our services are inclusive and accessible through regularly reviewing our policies and procedures.</p> <p>We will review our policies and procedures annually, ensuring that they continue to support the LGBTQ+ community.</p>	<p>Lead - Bruce Penhale, Assistant Director Early Help * covering domestic abuse</p> <p>Lead - Claire Smith, Director of Nursing and Quality (Oldham CCG) *covering midwifery</p> <p>Supported by - Corporate Policy / Equality Advisory Group / Community Cohesion Team</p>	<p>No communities or groups are disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, or the mitigating actions put in place.</p>
	<p>Identifying impacts for those on low incomes, or zero-hour contracts, who cannot work from home and those with no access to public funds, through providing routes to advocacy and supporting people to access grants.</p> <p>Continue to develop an integrated financial support offer, ensuring financial support can be accessed through the community hubs, helping to help to prevent further escalation into crisis for those who are struggling financially. *</p> <p>* Please see Oldham's Poverty Action Plan for further information.</p>	<p>Lead – Ann Marie-McGinn, Emerging Communities Manager</p> <p>Lead – Pam Siddall, Head of Revenues, Benefits &amp; Customer Services</p>	<p>Residents are appropriately signposted to the right support, with our most vulnerable communities stopped from falling into further crisis.</p>

		Supported by - PAG and Community Hubs / Welfare Rights / Revenues and Benefits / Emerging Communities Team / DWP	
	<p>Addressing inequalities relating to age. This is both for Older People and Young People:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Older People – providing information and support for older people who have been impacted by the pandemic, including helping them access crisis support post-pandemic.</li> <li>2. Young people – providing information and support for younger people who have been impacted by the pandemic, considering the reduction in their support services, mental health and wellbeing provision and access to respite and support for young carers.</li> </ol> <p>We will update the Covid-19 EIA quarterly, identifying any new or emerging impacts on both older people and younger people, ensuring appropriate mitigations can be put in place.</p> <p>We will support schools and educational settings to help young people catch-up on their learning; ensuring all children and young people can achieve their full potential; meeting the needs of children with SEND and building inclusive school cultures.</p> <p>We will work to provide the Best Start in Life to all Oldham’s children, reducing vulnerabilities and addressing inequalities, developing a comprehensive approach to identifying and addressing the needs of children and families. * Please see Oldham’s Covid-19 Recovery Strategy for further details.</p>	<p>Lead - Neil Consterdine, Assistant Director, Youth, Leisure and Communities</p> <p>Supported by - Ageing Hub / Youth Services / Adult Social Care / Children’s Social Care / Children and Young People</p>	<p>No communities or groups are disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, or the mitigating actions put in place.</p>

	<p>Through the Equality Advisory Group, we will continue to ensure that those with particular faiths or beliefs are able to live their lives accordingly, identifying any potential gaps in our understanding or approach to tackling the pandemic in Oldham. This includes ensuring access to appropriate end of life care, bereavement services, culturally appropriate food and other religious and cultural needs.</p> <p>We will continue to meet with the Equality Advisory Group on a fortnightly basis, working with different faith groups to ensure Oldham's Covid-19 response is culturally sensitive and appropriate.</p>	<p>Lead - Jonathan Downs, Corporate Policy Lead</p> <p>Supported by - Equality Advisory Group / Oldham Interfaith Forum</p>	<p>No communities or groups are disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, or the mitigating actions put in place.</p>
<b>Equality Objective</b>	<b>Key Actions</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Impact</b>
<p><b><i>Provide services that put the citizens' voice at the heart of decision-making, ensuring our services are inclusive and drive equity:</i></b></p>	<p>Establish standardised categories and classifications for equality data being collected and recorded, ensuring consistency across Team Oldham to inform and shape our decisions.</p> <p>We will develop an equality dashboard helping us measure how we are tackling inequalities across the borough, Team Oldham's services and our workforce.</p> <p>We will continue to strengthen the collection of equality related data across the council and will work to identify how we use this data to inform service planning and development, seeking to continually improve our performance over time. The results of this work will be reported back to Oldham's Equality Steering Group on an annual basis.</p>	<p>Lead - Jon Taylor, Business Intelligence Lead</p> <p>Supported by - Data and Insight / Oldham CCG</p>	<p>Increased understanding of our communities and workforce.</p>
	<p>Establish working groups to identify inequalities and put mitigation plans in place –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a senior equalities leadership group, led by the Strategic Director of Communities &amp; Reform to challenge and drive improvement across the Council and wider partnership.</li> </ul>	<p>Lead - Jonathan Downs, Corporate Policy Lead</p> <p>Supported by - Corporate Policy / Executive Support / Equality Advisory Group</p>	<p>Increased visibility and accountability to tackle equality, diversity and inclusion issues across Team Oldham.</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to support Oldham's Equality Advisory Group which is made up of council officers, representatives from the VCFSE sector and from each of the main protected characterises groups, providing the group with a stronger mandate and resources to constructively challenge equality issues across Oldham.</li> </ul>		
	<p>Actively engage with people and communities to better understand the confidence people have in our services, as well as the barriers they experience when accessing services and where applicable we work in partnership with service users from protected groups, both internal and external to address these barriers.</p> <p>We will continue to work with the Equality Advisory Group, Community Champions programme and wider network to co-design and improve our services, ensuring they are accessible to everyone, especially those with protected characteristics.</p>	<p>Lead - Shelley Kipling, Assistant Director Communications, Strategy and Performance</p> <p>Lead - Fran Lautman, Customer Development Manager</p> <p>Supported by - Marketing and Research / Elected Members / Poverty Action Group / Poverty Truth Commission / Equality Advisory Group / Stronger Communities Team</p>	<p>All Oldham residents, especially those with protected characteristics, can access services and feel enabled to do so.</p>
	<p>Continue to publish Oldham's annual equality report a profile of the borough's population based on the nine protected characteristics.</p>	<p>Lead - Jon Taylor, Business Intelligence Lead</p> <p>Supported by - Data and Insight / Corporate Policy</p>	<p>Increased understanding of our communities and workforce.</p>

Equality Objective	Key Actions	Who	Impact
<p><b><i>Champion inclusivity across the borough, working with our partners and communities to make Oldham a fairer place for everyone, while valuing and celebrating diversity and inclusion for all.</i></b></p>	<p>Take a joined-up approach with our public and voluntary sector partners to raise awareness of hate crime and to ensure that hate crime is effectively tackled, helping people feel more confident to report it.</p> <p>We will monitor customer satisfaction through the Greater Manchester Police reporting framework, identifying and implementing opportunities to improve the experience of people impacted by hate crime.</p>	<p>Lead - Natalie Downs, Stronger Communities Manager</p> <p>Supported by - Stronger Communities Team / VCFSE partners</p>	<p>Increased reporting of all strands of hate incidents and hate crime.</p>
	<p>Supporting and adopting an anti-racism approach to combat racial prejudice, stereotyping, harassment, unjustified discrimination, undignified and culturally insensitive and offensive behaviour.</p> <p>We will continue to promote race equality and cultural awareness, helping us foster mutually beneficial and respectful long-term relationships across different communities.</p>	<p>Lead - Virbai Kara, Senior Communities Officer</p> <p>Team Oldham / Stronger Communities Team / Community Safety and Cohesion Partnership / Communications Team</p>	<p>Increased reporting of all strands of hate incidents and hate crime.</p>
	<p>Develop a training programme that has equality, diversity and inclusion at its heart, providing training on equality issues, including cultural awareness training, co-design with communities, tackling inequalities that exist across Oldham and embedding equality and diversity into the development, design and delivery of Oldham's services.</p>	<p>Lead - Julia Veall, Director of Workforce and Organisational Design</p> <p>Supported by - Stronger Communities Team / Business Intelligence / Organisational Development / Research and Engagement</p>	<p>Awareness raised of help and support available to residents across Team Oldham.</p>
	<p>Improve the knowledge and understanding of hate crime identification by staff and drive improvements in recording hate crimes.</p>	<p>Lead - Natalie Downs, Stronger Communities Manager</p>	<p>Increased reporting of all strands of hate incidents and hate crime.</p>

	<p>We will monitor customer satisfaction through the Greater Manchester Police reporting framework</p>	<p>Lead - Julia Veall, Director of Workforce and Organisational Design</p> <p>Supported by - Stronger Communities Team / Business Intelligence / Organisational Development</p>	
	<p>Work with the community safety and cohesion partnership to provide cultural awareness training to Oldham's Domestic Violence Advisors, ensuring staff are aware of potential equality issues and cultural sensitivities that may lead to a lack of engagement from vulnerable groups.</p>	<p>Lead - Debbie Margiotta, Early Help Service Manager</p> <p>Supported by - Stronger Communities Team / Community Safety and Cohesion Partnership</p>	<p>Increased reporting of all strands of hate incidents and hate crime.</p>
	<p>Establish a Poverty Truth Commission made up of councillors and commissioners, to recommend measures to tackle poverty, identify causes and mitigate the consequences, informing the development of a Poverty Strategy. This work will have a direct link with the COVID-19 response and recovery work and will seek to identify specific areas around poverty including (not exhaustive) –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No recourse to funds</li> <li>• Access to food and foodbanks</li> <li>• Resources for children being educated at home</li> </ul>	<p>Lead - Amanda Richardson, Corporate Policy Manager</p> <p>Supported by - Action Together / Corporate Policy</p>	<p>Reduced levels of financial hardship / poverty across the borough.</p> <p>*Please see Oldham's Poverty Strategy for further details.</p>
	<p>Establish a Poverty Steering Group to take forward co-ordinated action to tackle poverty in Oldham, informed by the Poverty Truth Commission; which will include a representative from the Equalities Advisory Group.</p>	<p>Lead - Amanda Richardson, Corporate Policy Manager</p>	<p>Reduced levels of financial hardship / poverty across the borough.</p> <p>*Please see Oldham's Poverty Strategy for further details.</p>

	The Poverty Steering Group will meet quarterly, aiming to address both the symptoms and causes of poverty in Oldham.	Supported by - Corporate Policy / Executive Support	
	Celebrate Oldham's diversity through regular equality-related events: Black History Month, International Women's Day, International Day of Persons with a Disability; LGBT+ History Month; Holocaust Memorial Day.	Lead - Virbai Kara, Senior Communities Officer  Lead - Jeni Harvey, Head of Communications and Research  Supported by - Research and Engagement / Heritage, Libraries and Arts	Increased community awareness of different protected characteristics, groups and backgrounds.
	Continue to promote Team Oldham-wide campaigns on issues such as mental health and domestic abuse, raising staff awareness and improving the customer experience through staff education and training.	Lead - Jeni Harvey, Head of Communications and Research  Supported by - Public Health / Oldham CCG / Communications / Stronger Communities Team / Heritage, Libraries and Arts	Awareness raised of help and support available to residents across Team Oldham.
	Continue to participate in Greater Manchester's Hate Crime Awareness Week, helping residents gain a better understanding of what hate crime is, how they can access support, and how they report and prevent hate crime in their area.	Lead - Jeni Harvey, Head of Communications and Research  Supported by - Stronger Communities Team / Public Health / Communications / Organisational	Increased reporting of all strands of hate incidents and hate crime / reduction in levels of hate crime.

		Development / Heritage, Libraries and Arts	
	Identify opportunities through our culture programme and Oldham's Cultural Strategy to capture and celebrate Oldham's diversity, for example, through statues, monuments, and cultural ambassadors.	Lead - Subnum Hariff-Khan, Head of Heritage, Libraries and Arts  Supported by - Communications / Heritage, Libraries and Arts	Increased community awareness of different protected characteristics, groups and backgrounds.
	Become a Living Wage Place, expanding the number of organisations in the borough that have living wage accreditation, and increasing the number of people whose salaries are uplifted as a result, providing secure, safe employment, addressing gender and ethnic pay imbalances and developing strategies for in-work progression and wellbeing support.  All Oldham's contracts will be uplifted to the Foundation Living Wage by 2023.	Lead - Jonathan Downs, Corporate Policy Lead  Lead - Steve Boyd, Head of Procurement  Corporate Policy / Procurement / Get Oldham Working / Equality Advisory Group	Reduced levels of poverty across the borough. *Please see Oldham's Poverty Strategy for further details.
<b>Equality Objective</b>	<b>Key Actions</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Impact</b>
<b><i>Achieve a skilled and diverse workforce building a culture of equality and inclusion in everything we do.</i></b>	Appoint corporate equality champions, drawn from the Team Oldham's senior management team to raise awareness on equality issues and promote good practice.  Appoint diversity champions, drawn from the Team Oldham workforce to champion diversity, challenge poor practice and provide feedback on issues impacting the wider Team Oldham workforce.	Lead - Paul Dernley Assistant Director, HR Operations  Supported by - Human Resources Organisational Development (HR/OD)	Increased visibility and accountability to tackle equality, diversity and inclusion issues across Team Oldham.

	<p>Use our role as an anchor institution to actively promote apprenticeships, increasing the number of apprenticeships available for underrepresented groups across Team Oldham, with the aim of having 2.3% of the workforce undertaking a new apprenticeship.</p>	<p>Lead - Jon Bloor, Head of Lifelong Learning, Employment and Skills Service</p> <p>Lead - Vikki Morris, Assistant Director, Organisational Development</p> <p>Supported by - Economy and Enterprise/ HR/OD / All Services</p>	<p>More opportunities for young people to come and work for Team Oldham.</p>
	<p>Publish an annual report showing how we are eradicating the pay gap between our male and female employees, helping to highlight any unfair practices, which we can abolish through our Workforce Strategy. We will also continue to develop this work to identify pay gaps for other underrepresented groups (where there is statistical validity) with a view to publish this information, while removing unfair or unequitable practices across our workforce.</p>	<p>Lead - Paul Dernley Assistant Director, HR Operations</p> <p>Supported by - HR/OD / Data and Insight</p>	<p>Reduction in the gender pay gap.</p>
	<p>Reduce the proportion of 'unknown' equality data we hold on our employees.</p> <p>We will publish the result of this work annually through our annual Equality Report.</p>	<p>Lead - Adam Ratcliffe, HR Delivery and Performance Manager</p> <p>Supported by - HR/OD / Data and Insight</p>	<p>Increased understanding of our communities and workforce.</p>
	<p>Review diversity data at all levels of our workforce and amongst our commissioned services to help identify areas for improvement, including amongst our commissioned services, highlighting priority areas for change.</p>	<p>Lead - Paul Dernley Assistant Director, HR Operations</p> <p>Supported by - HR/OD / Equality Advisory Group</p>	<p>Increased understanding of our communities and workforce.</p>

	Develop a recruitment framework that aims to improve the diversity of Team Oldham. The framework will improve how recruitment processes operate in practice with a view to better understand why some groups are less likely to succeed in getting jobs than other groups. We will challenge our internal recruitment processes to overcome these barriers. The outcomes of this work will be reported to the Equality Advisory Group on an annual basis.	Lead - Paul Dernley Assistant Director, HR Operations  Supported by - HR/OD / Equality Advisory Group	Increased understanding of our communities and workforce.
	Pilot new approaches to advertising roles through community outreach and different platforms to better target local communities and supports our approach to Community Wealth Building.	Lead - Paul Dernley Assistant Director, HR Operations  Supported by - HR/OD / Communications and Marketing / Equality Advisory Group	Improved community representation across Team Oldham's workforce.
	Review existing recruitment practices to ensure the values and competency-based approach to recruitment at all levels provides the right approach to improve diversity throughout the organisation	Lead - Paul Dernley Assistant Director, HR Operations  Supported by - HR/OD	Improved community representation across Team Oldham's workforce.
	Continue to develop a workforce that is representative of the communities we serve, seeking to recruit locally and from priority groups where appropriate e.g. young people, people with disabilities and long-term health problems, people experiencing poverty.	Lead - Paul Dernley Assistant Director, HR Operations  Supported by - HR/OD / Equality Advisory Group	Improved community representation across Team Oldham's workforce.
	Ensure that managers are equipped with the tools to manage their teams in a supportive way; embracing difference whilst applying consistently fair practices across all groups.	Lead - Vikki Morris, Assistant Director, Organisational Development	Improved employee satisfaction / Improved community representation across Team Oldham's workforce.

		Supported by - All Services / HR/OD	

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