Equality Plan Summary

2023-2026



Helping shape the final equality plan

We are presenting an initial set of objectives and ideas in the Equality Plan Summary.

Over the next few months, we invite residents, community partners and partners to help us finalise the plan.

This will be through open engagement about the objectives. It will also be through a more thematic exploration of specific areas of work.

Through this, we will be developing a much richer evidence base of need

These insights will directly inform the more detailed Equality Plan which will be presented to a meeting of the Council later in the year.

Read the full **Equality Plan Summary here**



We want to ask you:

- Have we got the objectives right?
- Are the priorities the right ones? What actions are missing? What groups are missing?
- What do you think the council needs to do differently to tackle inequality of outcomes? Is there something we could learn from your community?
- What new solutions do you want to see? What good practice are you aware of or progressing?
- How can we best involve residents in shaping solutions and holding us to account?
- You are also invited to share your views on the LGBTQIA strategic framework and anti-racism action plan.



Why we need a plan

In 2022, Hackney Council adopted a new Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan:

- presents the Council's ambitions for the next four years,
- describes the key challenges,
- sets out how we will respond, working with residents and partners,
- and includes commitments for how the Council maximises its own resources jobs, contracts and making best use of our spaces and assets.



Why we need a plan

We are in one of the most difficult times in post war memory, with deep inequalities in society, and in our borough:

- The UK faces the most severe cost-of-living crisis in 40 years. Hackney residents are really struggling with this latest crisis, coming after the pandemic and over a decade of national government cuts.
- Demand for support is increasing, Council budgets cannot keep up with the level of demand.
 We expect this situation to become even worse and we expect government cuts over the next few years.
- We will have to make very difficult decisions about budgets and services over the next few years

The equality plan will:

- help focus on achieving fair outcomes for Hackney residents. help us understand the context for these decisions.
- help us to consider what we can do, if anything, to mitigate these actions.



- This is an early draft of the plan. It is a summary version.
- We will consult and engage with residents, staff and partners between now and the end of December.
- We will then develop the plan further incorporating insight from the consultation.
- The final version of the plan will be more detailed. It will be presented to Full Council for adoption at a future date.



- The final plan will update our understanding of needs and what is driving inequality.
- We will identify priority actions.
- We need to focus on those who face unfair and unequal outcomes.
- We will set out how we tackle poverty and help people to thrive.
- We will describe the actions we take to celebrate, value and serve communities.



Discrimination can be deeply embedded into our processes and cultures. This means that we keep failing residents and fail to tackle inequality. This is unfair, a waste of resources and leads to wider problems as inequality is bad for everyone.

- The plan is clear that we need to change as an institution to better meet residents' needs
- The plan commits to doing more to embed equality into everyday service design, changing our our leadership and management culture
- We will take action so that the Council workforce reflects the diversity of Hackney communities

This is not just about the Council. It is about statutory partners, the voluntary and community sector, local businesses and employers. It is about representative and participatory structures and boards and committees. We want this change to happen across the system that residents come into contact with.

There is good practice in progress across the system. We will lead by example and bring partners together to support change.



Some residents feel that Council communication does not resonate with their experience of life in the borough. They feel we are too defensive when presented with new ideas or challenges. Although trust in the Council is high for the whole population, it is much lower for Black and Global majority residents and social housing tenants.

- We need to develop a culture that is comfortable with hearing uncomfortable truths
- We need to be more open and confident about working with residents to be part of the solutions
- We must pay attention to residents who we are least likely to hear
- We have to remain agile and adaptive to meeting new needs that we identify through this dialogue.



Who the Equality Plan is for:

There are **9 protected characteristics** covered by the Equality Act



Age



Sex



Pregnancy or maternity



Disability



Religion or Belief



Sexual Orientation



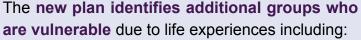
Race



Gender Reassignment



Marriage & Civil Partnership*





- looked after children, care experienced people & care leavers
- single parents
- Refugees and people who have an immigration status that makes them vulnerable
- Small population communities e.g. ex Armed Forces
- people with multiple interconnected challenges ("complex needs")
- People experiencing menopause



Hackney also recognises social and economic disadvantage and social class as a key driver of disadvantage and seek to address it within an equality framework





^{*} Only covers unlawful discrimination

Equality Plan Objectives

1.Tackle inequality at every life stage

2. Build prosperity and wellbeing

3. Celebrate, value and serve diverse communities

4. Take action to develop the leadership and management culture and ensure workforce diversity at all levels

Equality Plan Summary

1. Tackle inequality at every life stage

Why This Matters:

More disadvantaged groups will face greater inequality. There is also proven bias in the system that may impact negatively on these same groups. As people get older, they can become more disadvantaged.

We see inequality of outcome at every life stage: Pregnancy, School readiness, Key Stage 4 (GCSE), Leaving school, Employment, Parenthood, Caring and Old age

When people face difficulty they can also experience inequality or unfair treatment. Examples include- Assessment of additional needs, Exclusions, Entering the criminal justice system, Unemployment, Eviction, Debt and Illness.

- Ensuring that we identify children's needs as early as we can to improve life chances.
- Taking preventative action at every life stage, working across the whole system. We need to be specific to needs and intersectional in the way we work.
- Making it easier for residents experiencing difficulties in life to get help early. This should be in community settings so we prevent crisis points and needs becoming more complex.



2. Build prosperity and wellbeing

Why This Matters:

Poverty and socio-economic disadvantage are the main causes of inequality.

We are in a cost of living and housing crisis, wage levels have stagnated and job security is eroded. Poverty is entrenching and more people are falling into difficulty or living in increasingly insecure and precarious situations in the borough. This is leading to growing inequalities. An unequal place affects everyone and has been proven to lead to greater mental health difficulty. A lot of what needs to change is outside of our control. What we can do is very limited.

We need to ensure we are proactively taking actions to build prosperity, wellbeing and to tackle poverty, and taking positive action to ensure that all residents benefit.

- Take action in line with our Poverty Reduction Framework, 2022. This strikes a balance between the immediate needs of people in poverty today and thinking about what we need to do to prevent poverty in the future.
- Tackle education inequalities and support people into employment.
- Take action to make sure the local economy benefits local people. Take action to promote wellbeing and tackle health inequalities.
- A lot of what needs to change is outside of our control. This
 includes responding to the housing crisis. What we can do is
 very limited and we need to be honest about what we can
 achieve.



3. Celebrate, value and serve diverse communities

Why This Matters:

Hackney's diverse, dynamic and changing population is what makes Hackney so unique and gives different areas their unique sense of identity. The very communities that helped create a sense of place could now be excluded and marginalised.

Hackney is a relatively cohesive borough but the community and community organisations are under strain. There is a relatively high level of trust overall in the Council, although this is much lower for Black and Global majority residents and social housing tenants. We need to put residents and communities first, pay attention to and consider underserved communities, and ensure residents have opportunities to shape our plans through effective engagement, co-design and co-production.

- Develop partnerships with communities and community organisations to better support communities and build trust and confidence in the state.
- Promote tolerance and stand up for groups who have become the scapegoats in current public discourse.
- Break down barriers that limit our reach, like language barriers.
- Develop a segmented, targeted and intersectional approach to community needs
- Greater opportunities for co-production and embedding approaches to place based working
- Revised engagement principles, including establishing more consistent ways of engaging residents on equality issues on an ongoing basis



4. Take action to develop the leadership and management culture and ensure workforce diversity at all levels

Why This Matters:

Some groups are more likely to face inequality and experience poor outcomes and to live in poverty. Groups don't happen to be more disadvantaged by chance. Structural disadvantage is rooted in prejudice and discrimination that is both historical and current and deeply embedded into societal structures, including public institutions.

We need embed a more inclusive, humble, anti-discriminatory mindset into culture, service planning, practice and accountability. This is so we stop repeating the patterns of failure that lead to differential treatment because of unchecked bias, prejudice, ignorance, stereotyping which leads to unfair treatment which can have a devastating impact on people's lives and is a waste of resources and of talent.

- Developing a workforce which is confident, collaborative, resident-focussed, inclusive, humble, anti-discriminatory, anti-racist and trauma informed
- This needs to be embedded into culture, service planning, practice and accountability. To support this we will update or develop guidance and toolkits:
 - Language and communication
 - Embedding equality and anti-racism into commissioning and procurement guidance
 - Participation and engagement
 - Developing our understanding of specific communities
 - Refreshed approach / toolkit to reaching diverse communities and working intersectionally
 - Informed Allyship, Inclusive leadership and cultural humility
- Recognising and supporting Staff Networks



Accounting for the impact of the plan

We will need to set up the right groups and support to make sure that:

- Everyone progressing actions in support of objectives 1, 2 and 3 are working together towards a common set of
 outcomes, intermediate and long term
- We are tracking progress against intermediate outcomes and regularly assessing if these are making a difference on our long term outcomes.
- We are taking action to embed equality, diversity and inclusion into service design, delivery and practice.
- We are taking action to ensure an open and humble and anti-racist leadership style
- We are taking action to ensure that the workforce reflects the diversity of Hackney's population at all levels and are working towards a common set of measures of success.
- We are tracking progress against these measures of success and our workforce is becoming more reflective of the diversity of the community at all levels.



Accounting for the impact of the plan

To support this we propose establishing governance that will include:

- A delivery group of senior officers
- Sessions led by the lead Cabinet Member with Cabinet leads and senior officers to review progress and impact.
- The Council's Corporate Leadership and Cabinet will jointly consider progress on a six monthly basis.
- An annual report on progress against this plan that is resident facing and in an accessible form
- We want to develop this further by developing proposals to involve residents in holding us to account. This
 is why we are asking you how we should do this as part of this consultation and engagement.

We will ask formal partnerships and partners to commit to working towards a shared approach to tackling key inequalities.



Links

Equality Plan

- → Summary Slides
- → Detailed Summary

Anti-Racism Plan

- → Summary Slides
- → Detailed Summary

LGBTQIA+ Strategic Framework

- → Summary Slides
- Detailed Summary

