

LGBTQIA+ Strategic Framework Summary

September 2023

Background



- Hackney's **Single Equalities Scheme 2018-2022** identified the need for an LGBT+ Action Plan and a Trans, Nonbinary, Intersex and Gender Non-conforming (collectively known as “Gender Diversity”) inclusion strategy.
- A **Gender Diversity inclusion review** of existing services was completed in early 2020 which made broad recommendations for service improvements. Unfortunately, further work was delayed due to the global pandemic.
- In 2021 the LGBT+ Action Plan and Gender Diversity Strategy were combined to form one piece of work which looks to set aspirations for Hackney to become a borough in which LGBTQIA+ people can thrive, and lay out a plan for how we may work towards those aspirations.
- The framework was adopted as part of the wider Equality Strategy 2023, however It is a discrete plan and will have discrete accountability and governance.
- During September & October 2023 we will be inviting residents, community partners and statutory partners to help us shape this plan.

Development



- The work began with a substantial research piece - a “Data and Insight Synthesis” - drawing on all the local information available and incorporating national data and insight, to identify key features that underpin LGBTQIA+ wellbeing and what supports genuine transformation.
- Through this research work, **six key themes** were identified, which have been expressed in the form of aspirations - framing our goals as part of a learning journey, focussing on how we make long term change
- This framework outlines the shared goals for the Council and our partners to work towards and encourages services to consider what can be actioned to work towards the aspirations.

- Accessibility & Service Provision
- Intersectionality
- Demographics & Data
- Informed Allyship
- Participation & Engagement
- Community Resilience & Belonging

The Aspirations



Theme	Hackney Council Aspires to...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Accessibility & Service Provision	...ensure LGBTQIA+ people are able to access services that meet their needs where they are listened to, understood, and taken seriously without judgement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Intersectionality	...recognise and celebrate the diversity of our LGBTQIA+ communities, paying attention to those who are often least heard and represented
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Demographics & Data	...improve our knowledge of our LGBTQIA+ communities through responsible data collection and use this information when planning services
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Informed Allyship	...be visible allies, open to learning and reflection, working in coalition with residents and organisations to promote LGBTQIA+ rights
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Participation & Engagement	...empower LGBTQIA+ people in Hackney to be able to influence the council on matters and policy that affect their communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Community Resilience & Belonging	...be a place where LGBTQIA+ people feel free and safe to express themselves with opportunities to connect with others

1: Accessibility & Service Provision



“Hackney aspires to ensure LGBTQIA+ people are able to access services that meet their needs where they are listened to, understood, and taken seriously without judgement”

What this means:

According to the research, the biggest factor in whether LGBTQIA+ people feel they've had a good service is when they're listened to, taken seriously and that they are not judged. The research suggests that this is more important to people than having their problem solved - so they clearly matter a great deal.

Understanding what makes people feel heard and taken seriously will help us develop training and resources for our front line staff. It's useful to know what it might look like if you were accessing a service and you felt like the person you spoke to really showed they understood what you were telling them.

What this might look like:

- Ensuring any database that holds resident information is able to accurately reflect their personal data, including options to add gender neutral titles (e.g. Mx) and pronouns, and that this information is secure and used appropriately.
- A directory of LGBTQIA+ specific services so residents can be referred to specialist services
- Training for all staff who come into contact with the public on LGBTQIA+ identities and issues
- Knowledge repositories for staff to access about minority identities and specialist services

2: Intersectionality



“Hackney aspires to recognise and celebrate the diversity and complexity of our LGBTQIA+ communities, paying attention to those who are often least heard and represented”

What this means:

The need to understand how LGBTQIA+ people may have different needs or experience discrimination in very different ways due to other Protected Characteristics - for example their race or religion - or other life experiences such as their immigration status, socio-economic situation or long term health challenges.

There are multiple LGBTQIA+ communities; Lesbians, Gay men, Bisexuals, Trans people, Queer folk, Intersex or people with variations of sexual characteristics, Asexual and others can and do have distinct needs and a "one size fits all" approach for may not always work or be the most effective course of action.

What this might look like:

- An understanding of Intersectionality is embedded into all relevant training
- Equality Impact Assessments have a section designed to draw out potentially intersectional impacts
- Intersecting needs are considered during grant making and commissioning processes
- Equality of outcomes are represented across all council strategies and plans, with clear links and signposting to relevant cross-service work

3: Demographics & Data



“Hackney aspires to improve our knowledge of our LGBTQIA+ communities through responsible data collection and use this information when planning services

What this means:

Without good data, it's hard to target funding and resources where they're needed most and to ensure our services are reaching those who are in need of them.

In order to improve services for LGBTQIA+ people, we need to commit to actively recording and using this data in service planning with a consistent approach to collecting equality related data across the organisation. We need to think about how we can make people feel confident to share their personal data with us, and that it will be secure and safe. The safer people feel to give us this information, the better our data will be.

What this might look like:

- Review the organisation's data collection strategy to ensure personal information data collection is trauma informed and consistently applied across the council
- Ensure that Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) data is used in service development and commissioning.
- Ensure when collecting data about service user experiences that SOGI data is captured in order to include this as a factor when determining user satisfaction
- Work with staff networks to improve staff disclosure on HR systems and during staff surveys
- Systems and databases are able to accurately and respectfully record information about people's gender identity.

4: Informed Allyship



“Hackney aspires to be visible allies, open to learning and reflection, working in coalition with residents and organisations to promote LGBTQIA+ rights”

What this means:

Visible expression of allyship, e.g. rainbow lanyard schemes or supporting Pride need to be backed up active work to improve LGBTQIA+ people's lives. Failing to do so could be it can be harmful, further marginalising LGBTQIA+ communities. It may also give the impression that the organisation isn't serious about their commitment to LGBTQIA+ Equality, potentially decreasing trust in the organisation.

It is important to go beyond visual allyship, through with ensuring our services are culturally humble, well informed and ready to listen and learn when we don't get it right.

What this might look like:

- A communications and dissemination plan for initiatives that support LGBTQIA+ communities (internal and external)
- A varied package of training materials for staff to understand the key needs and issues for LGBTQIA+ service users, building on the Gender Diversity FAQ
- Engage with LGBTQIA+ residents and organisations to understand what they would like to see from the organisation. E.g. a community form, a local pride etc

5: Participation & Engagement



“Hackney aspires to empower LGBTQIA+ people in Hackney to be able to influence the council on matters and policy that affect their communities”

What this means:

Events, projects and services should not only include LGBTQIA+ communities but should actively involve communities at the development and planning stage. We need to make sure that where funding is available we're putting it into events and initiatives that genuinely make a difference. Identifying different and creative ways to allow people to participate is important, as formal focus groups are not always the best way to talk to communities with experience of discrimination or not being listened to.

As a council we need to make sure we're making the effort to reach out to parts of the LGBTQIA+ community who are often less heard and that we're seeking out lived experience expertise within our communities.

What this might look like:

- Creation of a Hackney LGBTQIA+ panel, similar to the Older People's Reference Group, who are recompensed for their participation.
- Direct co-production with the Hackney LGBTQIA+ panel in relevant council business, e.g. creation of policy matters, funding decisions, public safety

6: Community Resilience & Belonging



“Hackney aspires to be a place where LGBTQIA+ people feel free and safe to express themselves with opportunities to connect with others”

What this means:

A key priority for LGBTQIA+ communities is to have safe access to daytime spaces and events which are not built around nightlife or alcohol. Public spaces don't always feel safe, and that people want more opportunities to be able to meet together in Hackney spaces.

LGBTQIA+ people were significantly impacted by feelings of isolation and loneliness during the pandemic.

Many LGBTQIA+ people do not feel safe reporting to the police, and that there need to be better ways at dealing with hate crimes and harassment and how people are supported, as well as work to prevent it happening in the first place through looking at public space improvements.

What this might look like:

- Revising booking procedures for council-owned community spaces which allow residents to use these spaces at minimal costs
- Reinstatement of the LGBTQIA+ Business Forum for LGBTQIA+ run local businesses and venues
- Investment in preventative and transformative justice approaches to reduce reliance on the criminal justice system

Approaches



There are three approaches to this work based on where the council has the most opportunity to effect change. While the two approaches may in some cases take place concurrently, there is some foundational work the council needs to carry out before the influencing stage can be genuinely effective.

1. Direct change
2. Influence
3. Partnership

Approaches



Direct Change

Where we implement transformation within the council through, for example

- training
- onboarding
- knowledge production and sharing
- policy review
- incorporation of equalities actions unilaterally across different strategies and work plans

Influence

As the council builds our internal competencies we can use our experience to influence partners to implement change within their own organisations through for example

- partnership working
- supplier policy
- commissioning policy
- shared training & peer learning opportunities

Partnership

Due to the iterative, collaborative and flexible nature of the framework, it is adaptable for other partners and organisations to adopt for their own transformation work.

This framework can be adopted in partnership with Hackney Council which will support alignment of goals and promote collaborative and co-productive approaches.

Hackney LGBTQIA+ Community Panel

Creation of a community panel or reference group is central to the strategy. This group would be broadly similar to the Older People's Reference Group and hold three core functions:

- Holding the Council to account in working towards the six aspirations
- Acting as a critical friend for new guidelines, policies and initiatives
- Measurement of the journey travelled towards the aims

The LGBTQIA+ community panel would be actively engaged, and this engagement would be reflected in all development work, not just within Equality Impact Assessments.

Responsibility for the Community Panel would require a strong lead with cross-cutting reach.

Accountability & Measurement



Success Measures

Improvement in Workforce activities will be linked to Stonewall benchmarking e.g. Hackney achieving Silver or higher in the Stonewall Workforce Equality Index

Individual workflows within this framework would have measurement determined at initiation and agreed by the LGBTQIA+ Community Panel.

For example - a workstream initiated to produce a joined up and consistent approach to collecting equalities data across the council would be measured through:

- seeing lower rates of “prefer not to say” - this would indicate that residents feel safer in providing us with their details and understand why we are collecting this information.
- Data being available via ICT’s data lake on LGBTQIA+ residents in Hackney
- Services actively include Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity as core demographic information along with Ethnicity, Religion, Disability etc.

Accountability & Measurement



Success Measures

Overarching measures of success of this programme would be:

- Hackney develops robust data on our LGBTQIA+ population, and this data is actively used to understand the experiences of LGBTQIA+ people in Hackney and their satisfaction with services. Collecting and utilising this data will allow us to measure, for example:
 - Experiences of LGBTQIA+ people with Housing services and the number of LGBTQIA+ people in Hackney who experience insecure housing
 - Complaints raised by LGBTQIA+ residents, and where they felt their identity impacted on the service they were provided.

Full Council Motion



This framework is supported by a **full council motion** made on 1st March 2023:

“This Council believes in equity of opportunity and that human rights are the bedrock of our society. Trans women are women. Trans men are men. Non-binary people are non-binary. We believe in the dignity of all people, and their right to respect and equity of opportunity. We value the strength that comes with difference and the positive contribution diversity brings to our community. **Our aspiration is for Hackney to be a safe, welcoming, and an inclusive borough for everyone, no matter their gender identity or gender expression.**”

[Read the full decision here](#)

[See how the motion aligns with the Aspirational Framework here](#)

Equality Plan

- [Summary Slides](#)
- [Detailed Summary](#)

Anti-Racism Plan

- [Summary Slides](#)
- [Detailed Summary](#)

LGBTQIA+ Strategic Framework

- [Summary Slides](#)
- [Detailed Summary](#)