

Bury Council  
Equality, Diversity &  
Inclusion Strategy

2024-2028

# **Bury Council Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2028**

## **1. Introduction**

Bury Council is committed to equitable and inclusive practice as a service provider, commissioner, community leader and employer. This commitment is made as a core part of the delivery of the LET'S Do It! Bury 2030 vision and a key element of the organisation's transformation journey.

A key tenet of LET'S Do It! is the co-design of our services and the future of our borough. With this in mind, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy has been co-produced with community leaders, staff groups and senior champions. It sets out:

- The part the Council will play in enabling residents and colleagues with protected characteristics to realise the aims of the Bury 2030 vision
- How the Council will meet its obligations in accordance with the general legal equalities duties
- Organisation-specific objectives and an action plan to be delivered between 2024 and 2028.

We have deliberately used the words equality, diversity and inclusion for this strategy as these words underpin the focus of this strategy:

**Equality** – Where everyone is treated fairly, with dignity and respect and recognising we may need to treat people differently to achieve this

**Diversity** – Understanding our differences and valuing these as a strength that we all benefit from

**Inclusion** – Providing equal access and opportunity to participate in our workplaces, our communities and in the use of services regardless of personal characteristics or circumstances.

This strategy builds on the success of our previous 2020-2024 Joint Inclusion Strategy, with NHS Bury, which laid the foundations of inclusive practice throughout the council and in our communities. This 2024-2028 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy is a Council only strategy and aims to build on the successes of the previous strategy to ensure that consideration of protected characteristics and intersectionality are threaded through our workplace and community activities. The Council is committed to working in partnership with NHS Greater Manchester with objectives in this strategy closely aligned to the equality objectives of the Integrated Care Board, particularly around race and workforce.

## 2. Context

This strategy has been developed recognising the diverse demography of the borough and the aspirations for the borough of our residents, business community, VCFE community, visitors and workforce. It supports improving lived experiences and outcomes for people with protected characteristics so that they can live and work in, or visit, a borough where they feel they belong and are valued.

### 2.1 Demography

Bury is a vibrant, diverse and cohesive Borough. It is home to over 190,000 people, every one of which should be enabled and empowered to maximise their life chances, play a full and active role in society and enjoy a high quality of life.

Bury's diversity includes (Census 2021):

- 51% Women and 49% Men
- Our age ranges are in line with the national demographic but we are an older borough regionally
- 20.16% of our population are people from an ethnic minority
- 18.51% of our population consider themselves to be disabled
- Our population follow a range of different religions and belief systems with significant Christian, Muslim and Jewish populations
- 3.27% of our population identify as LGBTQIA+
- 8.71% of our population are unpaid carers
- 90.26% of our population speak English as a first language
- 2.60% of our population are veterans

### 2.2 LET'S Do It! Bury 2030 vision

The Bury 2030 strategy makes a strategic commitment to tackle inequalities with a clear pledge to drive inclusion, as one of five outcome measures which are:

- **Inclusive** communities
- **Healthy**, connected people
- A strong **economy**
- Be on the way to **carbon neutrality**
- A **digital**-first approach

The inclusion vision for Bury 2030 is to enable every person in the Borough to fully participate in and shape the collective, by supporting people to be themselves; to speak out about ideas and concerns and to be heard.

It describes commitments to develop relationships; create new and developed fora to hear every voice and co-design services with the people

who use them, as well as ongoing community safety activity which drives cohesion through a culture of trust, tolerance and understanding.

Four key principles underpin this vision, for a “people powered” Bury where everyone demonstrates common behaviours which support inclusion.

<b>Local</b>	<b>Enterprise</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging with people about how they live and work</li> <li>• Hearing all voices and learning from them</li> <li>• Trusting and helping each other, always working together</li> <li>• Listening when others talk, helping and enabling</li> <li>• Supporting development and growth and removing barriers to collaboration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrating pride in our collective and individual achievements and in the place where we live</li> <li>• Ensuring everyone has an equal voice and equal life chances by harnessing and nurturing all talents</li> <li>• Championing innovation, always looking for ways to improve quality of life for all</li> <li>• Being courageous and stepping out of our comfort zone to help ourselves and others</li> <li>• Opening doors at every opportunity</li> </ul>
<b>Together</b>	<b>Strength</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committing to making a positive, practical difference in addressing and tackling our challenges</li> <li>• Valuing and developing the role and voices of people and communities to shape and deliver, wherever we can</li> <li>• Empowering residents and groups to take decisions and harness resources</li> <li>• Strength through cultural diversity</li> <li>• Growing relationships and new connections across boundaries</li> <li>• Demonstrating dignity, kindness and respect in everything we do</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Really listening to understand each other and our shared potential</li> <li>• Being flexible and putting our energies into where we can make the most positive difference; asking 'what matters to you?'</li> <li>• Being open to trying new things and doing things differently</li> <li>• Valuing the skills, strengths and successes of individuals and communities</li> </ul>

### 2.3 EDI Strategy Consultation

In the spirit of LET’S Do It, this strategy has been developed through engagement with council service teams, colleague networks, Bury VCFA member organisations, Persona and at community events such as Bury Pride.

Feedback from the consultation suggested the strategy should have a focus on:

- A greater understanding of intersectionality when commissioning or planning, developing and delivering our services
- The importance of collating and using good data and information
- Ensuring safe spaces for intersectional identities
- Providing self support for people with protected characteristics
- Greater collaboration on delivering EDI in communities
- Increased engagement from council workforce with communities of interest and identity

### **3. Compliance with legislative requirements**

As public services the Council operates within the context of the following legislation:

**The Equality Act 2010** (The Act) brings together all the legal requirements on equality that the public, private and voluntary sectors need to follow. It protects people from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the basis of their 'protected characteristics', namely:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion and Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Since 2020, the council has committed to recognising four additional characteristics which will continue to be viewed as 'protected characteristics' and given the same attention as those set out in the Equality Act 2010:

- Carers
- Care experienced children and care leavers
- Military veterans
- The socio-economically vulnerable

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, 'the Public Sector Equality Duty', Bury Council are required to have 'due regard' for protected characteristics in everything we do to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
2. Take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people'

3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristics and those who do not.

This involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages people experience due to their protected characteristics
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
- Encouraging persons who share a relevant protected characteristics to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

In addition, as public sector bodies, the council is required to meet some specific public sector equality duties. These are to:

- Publish objectives that will advance equality every four years.
- Publish equality information annually to show how we are complying with the general equality duty, in relation to its workforce and its services and progress against our equality objectives

**The Health and Safety Act 1974** requires employers to have 'due regard' for the health, safety and security of employees in the workplace

**The Human Rights Act 1998** requires all public bodies, including the Council, and those acting on behalf of public bodies to act in a way that respects and protects an individual's human rights.

**The Health and Social Care Act 2012** introduced legal duties for local authorities to take steps reduce health inequalities and improve the health of people living in their area.

**The Care Act 2014** sets out when the local authority has a responsibility to meet someone's care and support needs. It also provides recognition and a definition of a carer and a cared for person.

**The Accessible Information Standard (AIS)** requires all organisations that provide health services (including GP practices or adult social care) to identify, record, share and meet the communication needs of patients/recipients of care who have a disability, impairment or sensory loss.

**The Armed Forces Act 2021** enshrines the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant in law requiring local authorities to reduce and eliminate disadvantages experienced by military veterans and serving military personnel in terms of housing, employment, healthcare and education by virtue of their military service.

**The Carers Leave Act 2024** requires employers to offer employees up to one week of unpaid leave per year. Employees are eligible to take this leave if they look after a dependent who has a 'long term care need'.

#### **4. Bury Council Inclusion Objectives 2024-28**

Each objective has been designed to support people with protected characteristics in achieving one or more of the seven LET'S Do It outcome measures.

##### **Objective 1: Skills and Employment**

Supporting the reduction of disadvantages experienced in skills and employment opportunities by people with protected characteristics and championing innovative recruitment techniques across the borough. With this objective we want to eliminate the disadvantages people with protected characteristics often experience when accessing learning, skills development and employment. We recognise that for people with intersectional characteristics, the disadvantages are even higher. To support this objective, we will bring together the collective strengths and expertise of our teams and partner organisations to provide multi-agency support into employment.

We commit to championing and role modelling inclusive recruitment practices across the borough retain membership of the Good Employment Charter to improve employment and skills opportunities for people with protected characteristics

##### **Actions to be taken to achieve this objective**

- 1.** Diversifying where we advertise council vacancies
- 2.** Promoting multi-agency support into employment
- 3.** Furthering our supported employment scheme for care experienced young people
- 4.** Maintain membership of the GM Good Employment Charter
- 5.** Champion the GM Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit across the borough

##### **Links to LET'S Do It**

Improved quality of life  
Improved educational attainment  
Increased adult skill levels and employability  
Inclusive economic growth  
Improved digital connectivity

##### **Objective 2: Health Inequalities**

Supporting strategies to reduce health inequalities for people who have protected characteristics such as the GM Ageing Well strategy, through engagement, awareness and co-designing our health inequalities work. Being able to access information is a crucial first step in disrupting a negative cycle and removing disadvantage in terms of health and wellbeing, developing a sensory impairment communication strategy will improve the access to health and wellbeing information and resources for people with sensory impairments.

We recognise that some personal characteristics and circumstances can create barriers to achieving a healthy lifestyle and in turn, these impact directly on physical and mental wellbeing creating a negative cycle that is difficult to disrupt, this is especially true when there are intersectional characteristics creating multiple disadvantages. By including health inequalities as part of our Equality Impact Assessments and using JSNA data, we can identify where inequalities exist based on protected characteristics and work towards removing disadvantages, additionally this provides an opportunity to support health inequalities work across council directorates and services.

### **Actions to be taken to achieve this objective**

1. Developing a sensory impairment communication strategy
2. Working with partner organisations to tackle food poverty
3. Including health inequalities as part of our EIA process
4. Using the JSNA to apply intersectional focus to service design
5. Providing access to cost-of-living advice and support
6. Responding to the Veterans Health Needs Assessment

### **Links to LET'S Do It**

Improved quality of life  
Improved early years development  
Improved educational attainment  
Inclusive economic growth

### **Objective 3: Housing and Accommodation**

Applying an EDI focus to the transfer of housing into the council, the provision of social housing to our residents and accommodation for communities of identity and interest.

This objective supports a focus on protected characteristics and intersectionality in terms of housing and accommodation. It is recognised that some characteristics and intersections increase the need for support in finding a suitable home or accommodation and this is a key foundation for our LET'S Do it ambitions for all of our residents. The need for support is particularly acute for care leavers, disabled people and cared for people.



We will ensure that there is a focus on the need for housing support arising from all protected characteristics and intersections which will be built into our housing strategy and allocation decision making.

### **Actions to be taken to achieve this objective**

1. Developing an accommodation strategy for care leavers
2. Delivering our housing vision for Adult Social Care
3. Specific focus on protected characteristics in the Bury Housing Strategy
4. Ensuring intersectional impacts are included in housing decisions
5. Ensuring protected characteristics are considered as part of the social housing regulatory standards

### **Links to LET'S Do It**

Improved quality of life  
Inclusive economic growth

### **Objective 4: Community Engagement**

Building EDI focused engagement with our VCSE organisations and Team Bury to foster effective community cohesion and strong two-way communication processes between the council and communities of identity and interest in our borough.

Through this objective we will harness a collaborative and collective approach to inclusion for the benefit of everyone in the borough. Working alongside and supporting civic leaders, community groups and partner organisations to deliver inclusion throughout Bury.

With a strong focus on people and place, this will support the development of inclusion leadership across the town, celebrating our cultural diversity and recognising the need for intersectional supportive spaces.

1. Supporting civic champions and leaders through the civic leadership programme
2. Increased cultural offering across the borough
3. Engagement and support for GM Equality Panel members
4. Promoting a 'Team Bury' collaboration approach to inclusion
5. Supporting and promoting intersectional community groups
6. Promote EDI specific volunteering with council colleagues
7. Establishing a women's community network
8. A review of accessibility and inclusion for blind and visually impaired people

### **Links to LET'S Do It**

Improved quality of life  
Improved educational attainment  
Increased adult skill levels and employability

Inclusive economic growth  
Improved digital connectivity

### **Objective 5: Data Collation, Analysis & Governance**

Collecting good demographics data about our residents and workforce and using this as an evidence base to tailor our services to the needs of people who use them. Developing strong governance and reporting structures so we can understand our performance by protected characteristics.

To build and drive inclusion in our workplaces and services, we need to understand our workforce and service users. This allows us to harness the diversity of the people we work with and for and tailor our activities so everyone can participate regardless of their personal characteristics or circumstances.

We recognise that characteristics and circumstances are often intersected, raising the impacts, barriers and challenges some people face. Analysis of demographics on an intersectional basis is therefore crucial to being able to understand these impacts and how we can eliminate them. Additionally we need to embed equality analysis in our processes and share how we conduct analysis with partner organisations so that best practice is shared and a consistent approach is taken to building and driving inclusion across our borough.

### **Actions to be taken to achieve this objective**

- 1.** Standardise monitoring across council services in line with the census
- 2.** Annual review of monitoring questions to keep these current
- 3.** Continual promotion of purposeful data gathering and analysis from service users and colleagues
- 4.** Establish an EDI steering group to oversee strategy delivery
- 5.** Embedding EIA in checklists and project management processes
- 6.** Sharing EIA practice with partner organisations

### **Links to LET'S Do It**

Improved quality of life  
Improved educational attainment  
Increased adult skill levels and employability  
Inclusive economic growth

### **Objective 6: Workforce Representation**

Achieving a council workforce that is representative of the communities that it serves through reducing and removing the challenges and barriers colleagues experience during recruitment, and accessing learning, skills and career development by virtue of personal characteristics.

With this objective we want to eliminate the disadvantages people with protected characteristics often experience during recruitment and when

accessing learning, skills and career development. Together with this we commit to broadening the knowledge and awareness of all colleagues of how lived experiences can impact how people experience and engage in the workplace.

We commit to delivering inclusive recruitment and delivering workforce inclusion through the GM workforce inclusion framework as well as revalidating our accreditations as a Disability Confident Leader and Armed Forces Covenant Gold Employer to inform our progress and evolve our inclusive recruitment and workplace practices.

# People Inclusion Standards

## Celebrating diversity and championing inclusivity

Greater Manchester is setting the standard for what inclusive workplaces look like.

1. Data informed
2. Equitable policies
3. Valued voice
4. Awareness and education
5. Fair recruitment
6. Development and progression for all
7. Embrace diversity
8. Retain, recognise and celebrate
9. Ask questions; be curious



### Actions to be taken to achieve this objective

1. Developing and actioning a council wide workforce representation plan
2. Access to characteristic specific leadership development and learning
3. Delivering characteristic specific training and awareness
4. Contribute to and adopt a GM Workforce Inclusion Framework
5. Revalidate EDI related workplace accreditations

## **6. Lead and role model the GM Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit**

### **Links to LET'S Do It**

Improved quality of life  
Improved educational attainment  
Increased adult skill levels and employability  
Inclusive economic growth  
Improved digital connectivity

## **5. Governance**

The strategy has been agreed by the council's cabinet, with responsibility for strategy implementation resting with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Inclusion.

Oversight of the strategy delivery will be provided by the council's Director of People & Inclusion and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager who will lead on co-ordinating actions and working collaboratively to deliver actions with key stakeholders.

As per the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty, an annual progress report will be published to update on progress.

A quarterly update by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager will be shared with key stakeholders.





<b>Objective 6: Workforce Representation</b>													
Developing and actioning a council wide workforce representation plan	•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•		•
Access to characteristic specific leadership development and learning	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Delivering characteristic specific training and awareness	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Contribute to and adopt a GM Inclusive Workforce framework	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Revalidate EDI related workplace accreditations	•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•		•
Lead and role model the GM Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit		•				•	•						

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