

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion, Equity and Belonging Policy - 2025 to 2029



Easy Read Document





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Introduction



This document is the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, and Belonging Policy.



Equality means everyone should be treated fairly and given the same opportunities.



Diversity means having different kinds of people together with different ideas.



Inclusion means making sure everyone feels welcome and respected, no matter who they are.



Equity means helping people in different ways so that everyone has a fair chance, especially people who need extra support.



Belonging means feeling safe and part of a group.



Kathy O'Leary, the Chief Executive of Stroud District Council, says:



At Stroud District Council, we want everyone to feel welcome, safe, and included.



We are working hard to make sure people from different backgrounds feel like they belong in the district of Stroud—whether they live here, work here, or are just visiting.



We also work hard to:

- Bring people from different groups together to make the Stroud district a kind and friendly place



- Make sure everyone gets the same opportunities



- Stop bullying or unfair treatment.



We do not want anyone to feel left out, especially people who might need extra support.



In the UK, some people find life difficult due to a lack of money, poor health, or because their home does not meet their needs.



COVID-19, rising prices, and limited opportunities for people from different backgrounds have also made life difficult for a lot of people.

We are working hard so that:



- Everyone can use the services they need



- Everyone can speak up in their community



- Everyone feels they belong in the district of Stroud.



This policy has three goals:



- Listen to people in the community and give them the best possible support



- Make sure the council works together and shares the same values



- Have a team of workers from different backgrounds who feel happy and included.



The law and equality



The Equality Act 2010 says
Stroud District Council must:



- Be fair to everyone, so that everyone gets the same chance to have a good life



- Give everyone a fair chance – help people who might need extra support

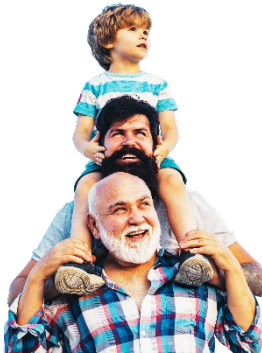


- Help people get along – make sure everyone feels included and respected.



Everyone is different and should be treated fairly.

The law says people must not be treated unfairly:



- Because of their age



- Because of their disability



- Because they are changing from one gender to another, which is also called gender reassignment



- Because they are married or in a civil partnership



- Because they are pregnant or have a baby, which includes breastfeeding



- Because of their race or where they come from



- Because of their religion or beliefs



- Because of their sex, if they are male or female

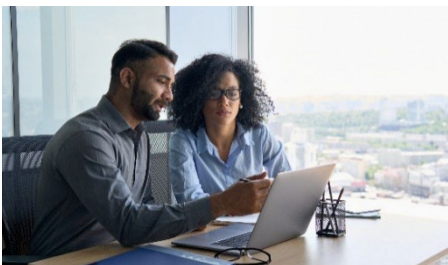


- Because of who they love, or their sexual orientation.



The Public Sector Equality Duty helps public organisations to:

- Make better decisions
- Find out how their policies and services give opportunities to different groups.





The law says public organisations should take steps to make a difference for people who have less opportunity:



- Because of their job



- Because of their education



- Because of where they live



- Because of their background or social class.



What the council wants to do



We want the district of Stroud to be a better place to live, work, and visit.

We will:



- Follow equality law and treat everyone fairly



- Make sure the work of the council supports different needs and views



- Work with the Police and Victim Support to deal with hate crimes



- Celebrate diversity and support campaigns that promote equality



- Make equality and diversity part of everything we do.



We expect Councillors,
workers and contractors to:



- Treat everyone with respect



- Offer the best support to local people and groups



- Consider the needs and views of local people and groups.

How the council wants to manage services



Make it fairer for businesses to work for the council.



Choose businesses to work for the council that care about fairness and treating others with respect.



Help council workers understand how to make fair and kind choices when setting up services or employing workers.



How the council plans to be a fair employer



Council staff will get training to make sure they offer high-quality services. We will:



- Manage bad behaviour at work



- Give workers the chance to play a part in writing policies and the ways that we work.



- Make sure staff can:

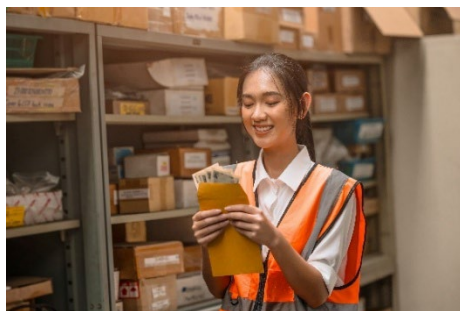


- Work different hours

- Work from home



- Have a good working life and a good family life



- Pay workers fairly and support them to do a good job



- Support workers with a disability by making changes to the workplace, which are also called reasonable adjustments



- Support workers to practice their religion at work



- Check and publish information about council workers, such as their age or if they have a disability.



How local councillors are making the district of Stroud more equal



Member champions are councillors who are chosen to make sure groups or issues are included in decisions the council makes.

The Member champion roles in the council are:



- Mental health champion



- Armed forces champion



- Migrant champion



- Equality, Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, and Belonging champion



- Litter and clean environment champion.



What the council has done since 2021



Listening to the community



Set up a team to work with local community groups to find solutions to problems in the area.



Worked with Gloucestershire Sight Loss Council to make it easier to get to places on the high street.



Worked out the best ways to get the views of local groups and people.



Working together



We put out a document called Our Service Standards to make sure we offer a good customer service that is fair for everyone.



Workers and councillors have been on equality and diversity training courses.



In 2024, the Staff Survey found that most workers thought the council made everyone feel included and supported fairness and equality.



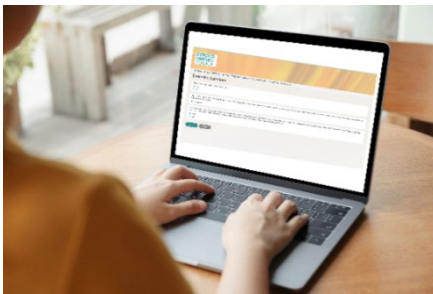
Most council workers thought the council was a good place to work for a career.



Diverse workforce



We have set up and supported staff groups and held events that celebrate diversity.



A new website was set up to make it easier to apply for a job at the council.



In 2023, the council was shortlisted for the Best equality, diversity and inclusion employer award.

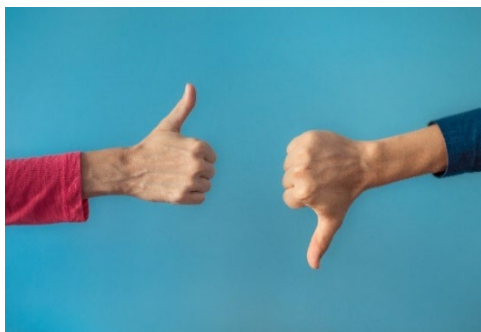
What is difficult for the council?



The council has to manage difficult issues to make sure it can offer fairer services. These are:



Differences in the health of people from different groups.



There are more hate crimes, and different groups across the country strongly disagree with each other.



An increase in violence against women and girls.



Some groups find it difficult to use public services.



Neurodivergent people are not getting the right support at work.



A lot more services are only available on the internet, which makes them difficult for some groups to use.



Many people need somewhere to live where they can afford to pay the rent.



After COVID, there is a bigger gap between rich and poor, which makes it difficult to support people at risk of poverty.



More support is needed for refugees and asylum seekers to live in safety and comfort.



There are concerns about the safety of people in the LGBTQIA+ community.



Less young people aged 8 to 18 years old are reading.

The reading age of most people in the UK is 9 to 11 years old.



More people who have left the armed services are finding it difficult to adjust to their new lives.



How the council will support people in the Stroud district



Work with community groups to support people living in the district of Stroud.



Send leaders and workers on equality and diversity training courses.



Make sure services are fair for everyone.



Use information about people who live in the area to make the best decisions about services.



Check how our plans support people from different backgrounds.



Work out how the council's plans and goals can support local people to get jobs.



Have a workforce that reflects the local people in the district.



Make sure leaders and workers understand:

- The importance of diversity
- How to manage discrimination.



Changes to all local councils in England could make our work more difficult.



It could also be a chance to work with new people and groups in the community.

How the council will check if what they do is working



We want to keep getting better at treating everyone fairly and making sure everyone feels safe and included.



We will check how well we are doing by finding out:



- The best ways to employ and look after workers



- How to make sure everyone can use our services.



To help us do this, we have an action plan that:



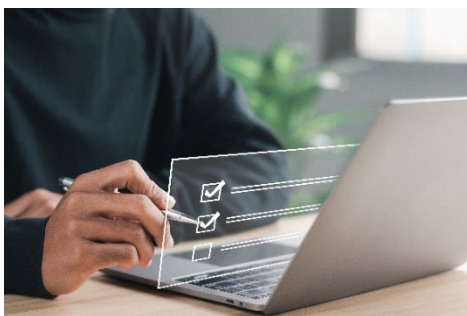
- Makes sure our workers are safe and happy



- Checks that everyone is getting an equal chance to achieve something



- Makes sure our services work for everyone.

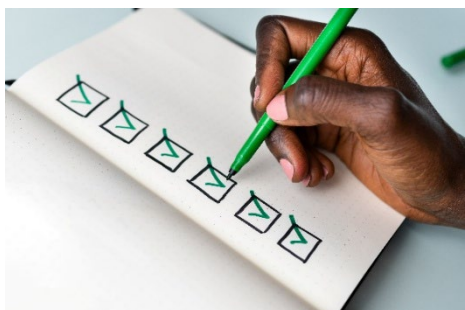


We regularly:

- Find out what council workers think



- Check that services meet the needs of local people.



The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, and Belonging Working Group checks the annual action plan every month.



The action plan allows the council to find out what has been done and how things could be fairer for everyone.



A report is presented to all councillors every year.



The council will review this policy in 2029.

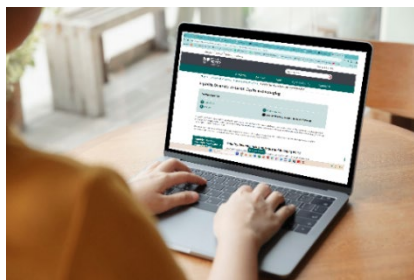


Useful information



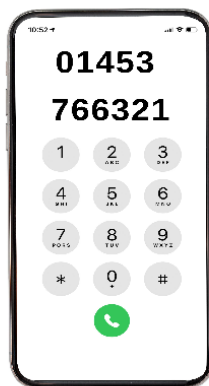
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