

UPDATE APRIL 2025

OUR ROLE AS COMMUNITY LEADERS				
WHAT WE WILL DO	HOW	RESPONSIBILITY	DELIVER AND/OR PROGRESS REPORT	REVIEWED/ MONITORED
<p>Work with our partners to implement the Council Plan 2023-26 and subsequently our revised Council Plan, which seeks to improve the social and economic environment of the borough.</p>	<p>Develop our strategies, policies and services so that they are accessible and inclusive that meet the diverse needs of our community.</p>	<p>All service areas</p>	<p>As strategies and policies are reviewed to ensure they consider our EDI commitments. Service plans to reflect our EDI commitments. Projects and programme governance to reflect our EDI commitments.</p> <p>We have continued to engage local groups and residents in shaping regeneration projects and town centre strategies through One Watford, ensuring our built environment is inclusive and meets local needs. Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are incorporated where appropriate, and work is underway to benchmark best practices and ensure fair access for all, including parking and infrastructure. Safeguarding policies are undergoing revision to reflect current EDI commitments, ensuring that our approach to supporting</p>	<p>Corporate Equality Working Group</p>

Watford Borough Council - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2023-27 Delivery Plan

			vulnerable individuals remains robust and comprehensive.	
	Work closely with the police, support agencies, voluntary groups, faith groups and wider partners to signpost those who need their support, e.g. Watford Community Network, Community Safety Partnership.	Community Commissioning Lead Community Safety Lead	We have continued to host bi-annual networking events that are open to voluntary sector organisations, faith groups, and key partners from across the county. These events have provided a valuable platform for collaboration and knowledge sharing. The feedback from exit surveys has been overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the benefits and impact of these gatherings.	Corporate Equality Working Group
	Use our influence to encourage other employers and service providers in the borough to champion equality, diversity and inclusion in employment, including through our Watford Business Charter.	Economic Development Lead	Through our Watford Business Pledge, we encourage local employers to adopt progressive practices on fair wages, wellbeing, EDI, and sustainability. This approach fosters economic growth by supporting local employment, community involvement, and green initiatives.	Corporate Equality Working Group

Watford Borough Council - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2023-27 Delivery Plan

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	Engage with our health partners to make sure the health and wellbeing needs of Watford are represented in new health structures and commissioning of services.	Head of Partnerships and Performance	Initial review December 2024 and then ongoing	Corporate Equality Working Group
	Demonstrate leadership in EDI, linking to the One Watford Place Board, recognizing the link to Watford's 2040 vision and missions.	Chief Executive	Quarterly meetings	One Watford Place Board
	Work with our partners, volunteers, community groups and businesses to tackle digital inclusion, supporting residents who do not have access to technology, choose not to do so or do not currently have the skills to use IT so that they have the same opportunities as others in our town.	Customer Experience	Quarterly	Corporate Equality Working Group
	Ensure our elected members understand their role in championing and promoting EDI as an important part of their responsibilities as community leaders, including through induction and training.	Democratic Services	Newly elected councillors are provided with e-learning modules on EDI principles, ensuring early engagement with their responsibilities as community leaders. An external EDI training session in October 2024 was attended by seven councillors, and additional sessions are planned.	Corporate Equality Working Group

Watford Borough Council - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2023-27 Delivery Plan

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Engage closely with Watford's diverse communities	Develop a Borough Profile so we know the characteristics of the residents of Watford's richly diverse community.	Business Intelligence Lead Community Commissioning Lead	Review annually We have been actively collaborating with voluntary sector organisations to gain a comprehensive understanding of the types of data they would like to see publicly available and the preferred formats for this information. Through a detailed survey, we gathered valuable feedback that has guided our efforts. As a result, we have successfully produced some of the census information in a mapped format, making it more accessible and user-friendly. Additionally, we are currently exploring innovative ways to present this data, including the development of story maps, which can provide a more engaging and narrative-driven approach to data visualisation.	Corporate Equality Working Group
	Listen to, and learn from, Watford's diverse community using the Watford People's Panel.	Chief Executive	Quarterly meetings	CMT

Watford Borough Council - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2023-27 Delivery Plan

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	Through our Community Engagement and Participation Strategy actively reach and secure input from our communities in the borough so that there are no barriers to local people influencing our decision-making.	Community Commissioning Lead Engagement Community of Practice	Quarterly meetings of Engagement Community of Practice to update Corporate Equalities Group. Our Engagement of Community Practice is in its infancy. Over the next six months, we will be producing a toolkit that will assist with inclusive commitment across the organisation.	Corporate Equality Working Group
	Encourage people with protected characteristics to be actively involved in our town and recognise their voices and contribution to help shape our services.	Community Engagement & Partnerships Engagement Community of Practice	Quarterly meetings of Engagement Community of Practice to update Corporate Equalities Group Our Engagement of Community Practice is in its infancy. Over the next six months, we will be producing a toolkit that will assist with inclusive engagement across the organization.	Corporate Equality Working Group
	Work with partners to support and promote festivals and events celebrating diversity.	Community Commissioning Lead Events Corporate Communications	We are working closely with our partners to promote festivals and events celebrating diversity. We bought in team of partners to work on International Women's Day events within the town, Windrush Day events for 2025 and 2026, a cultural festival to	Corporate Equality Working Group

Watford Borough Council - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2023-27 Delivery Plan

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		and Campaigns Lead	<p>mark the launch of the fringe in June 2025, and Diwali celebrations for 2025.</p> <p>We continue to support community events such as Herts Pride (promoting LGBTQ+ visibility), Cultural Carnival (showcasing our diverse heritage), and Purple Tuesday (improving customer experiences for disabled people). These events reinforce a borough-wide culture of inclusivity.</p> <p>Ask for Clive Initiative: We actively promote the “Ask for Clive” campaign, encouraging venues to maintain a zero-tolerance policy toward discrimination. This initiative exemplifies how our partnerships drive positive changes in community settings.</p>	

Watford Borough Council - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2023-27 Delivery Plan

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<p>Lead by example by modelling good practices of equality, diversity and inclusion as a service provider, commissioner, and employer.</p>	<p>Develop communication messages and campaigns to celebrate diversity and promote respect and inclusivity.</p>	<p>Corporate Communications and Campaigns Lead</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Corporate Equality Working Group</p>
	<p>Ensure that EDI is a core part of service planning processes and initiatives.</p>	<p>Associate Director Corporate and Customer Services</p> <p>Service Delivery Leads</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Corporate Equality Working Group</p>
	<p>Encourage partners to promote their events in our cultural calendar that celebrates diversity and inclusive events.</p>	<p>Corporate Communications and Campaigns Lead</p> <p>Community Commissioning Lead</p>	<p>We remain committed to co-producing services with our communities, ensuring that low-engagement groups are reached and that all services comply with statutory requirements.</p> <p>Our Watford Actually platform continues to highlight and share diverse cultural events, further weaving EDI values into the social fabric of the borough.</p>	<p>Corporate Equality Working Group</p>

Watford Borough Council - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2023-27 Delivery Plan

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	Review and refresh the Equality Impact Assessment template and develop supporting guidance.	Executive Head of HR and OD	To be reviewed in quarter 1 2025	Corporate Equality Working Group
	Develop the Watford Wheel sustainability tool to include a set of social indicators.	Sustainability Manager	Launched in April 2024, this framework now includes social indicators to better measure and track inclusive outcomes across council functions and projects.	Corporate Equality Working Group
	Develop and seek agreement for a minority ethnic communities' definition that embraces the diversity of Watford's community	Executive Head of HR and OD	To be reviewed in quarter 1 2025	Corporate Equality Working Group

Watford Borough Council - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2023-27 Delivery Plan

OUR WORKFORCE				
WHAT WE WILL DO	HOW	RESPONSIBILITY	DELIVER AND/OR PROGRESS REPORT	REVIEWED/ MONITORED
Increase equalities disclosure on recruitment and staff monitoring information to support our aim for a diverse workforce that reflects our community	Share how employee equality data is used, with examples of changes or improvements we have made so employees can understand how disclosing their data on protected characteristics can benefit themselves and others.	Executive Head of HR and OD Corporate Communications and Campaigns Lead	We are updating our approach to collecting and analysing equalities data. A communications campaign, scheduled in 2025, will explain to staff how data disclosure drives policy improvements and benefits everyone. Equalities data is being collected from our commissioned organisations on a quarterly basis.	Corporate Equality Working Group
Raise the profile of our Staff Ambassador, Mental Health, Career Coaches, and Wellbeing groups and support their work	Develop communications and email signoffs so that colleagues in these groups are highly visible across the organisation, and their roles and remit are clearly understood.	Executive Head of HR and OD Corporate Communications and Campaigns Lead	New staff signatures rolled out where people can add additional roles within agreed template.	Corporate Equality Working Group
	Encourage employees to participate in learning and support groups as part of their professional development and wellbeing.	CMT Service Delivery Leads	Promote from May 2025	Corporate Equality Working Group

Watford Borough Council - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2023-27 Delivery Plan

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<p>Promote a working environment that promotes dignity and respect where individual differences, and the contributions are recognised and valued.</p>	<p>Develop an equality statement to include in all our recruitment adverts.</p>	<p>Executive Head of HR and OD</p>	<p>A new equality statement features prominently in all recruitment adverts reinforcing our commitment to diversity from the outset. We have updated all new role profiles to include a collective commitment to EDI.</p>	<p>CMT Corporate Equality Working Group</p>
	<p>Work to secure the next level of the government's Disability Confident accreditation status.</p>	<p>Executive Head of HR and OD</p>	<p>We have achieved recognition as a 'Disability Confident Leader', the highest level in the government's Disability Confident scheme. This milestone reaffirms the council's ongoing commitment to being inclusive and accessible organisations for all.</p>	<p>CMT Corporate Equality Working Group</p>
<p>Demonstrate zero tolerance of any unfair and unacceptable treatment in the workplace, and to discipline those that breach this policy.</p>	<p>Clearly describe, define and embed the behaviours that are accepted and expected as part of the culture of the council.</p>	<p>Executive Head of HR and OD</p>	<p>September 2024</p>	<p>CMT Corporate Equality Working Group</p>

Watford Borough Council - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2023-27 Delivery Plan

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	Develop a zero-tolerance behavioural initiative that brings together expectations from different areas, including how unacceptable behaviour can be challenged and reported.	Executive Head of HR and OD	We developed six core values that are important to us, as they show us who we are. Our behaviours sit alongside our values, translating them into day-to-day actions and demonstrating how we bring our values to life. They outline what we can expect from each other at work and ensure we all play our part in building a transformational culture where we are continually evolving, exploring innovation, and bringing fresh ideas and ways of working to everything we do.	CMT Corporate Equality Working Group
	Ensure any report about unfair treatment towards employees, and by employees, is recorded and appropriate action taken in line with council policy and equality legislation.	Executive Head of HR and OD	We are drafting a new Anti-Harassment Policy to replace the current Bullying and Harassment Policy, clearly defining acceptable workplace conduct and how to report unacceptable behaviours.	CMT
Ensure staff have access to up to date and appropriate training so they understand how EDI impacts their role and responsibilities.	Review online training and consider alternative training that supports staff in their understanding. Ensure EDI is included in staff induction.	Executive Head of HR and OD	A series of Lunch and Learn sessions for staff and managers focused on protected characteristics (e.g., menopause, neurodiversity) and sensitive topics (e.g., White Ribbon). These sessions foster open dialogue, build empathy,	CMT Corporate Equality Working Group

Watford Borough Council - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2023-27 Delivery Plan

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			and encourage inclusive behaviour at every level. We are reviewing our online EDI training offerings and exploring alternative methods to support different learning styles and needs	

Watford Borough Council - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2023-27 Delivery Plan

DELIVERING SERVICES				
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Deliver services that are accessible to all and that are tailored to the diverse and changing needs of our community.	Where appropriate and reasonable, adapt services to meet the needs of the whole community, promoting equal access to services, including producing clear information about how to access our services.	All service areas Corporate Communications and Campaigns Lead	Ongoing and annual update to Corporate Equalities Group – starting January 2025	Corporate Equality Working Group
	Ensure that reasonable adjustments are provided, where necessary, to help our customers access services and to support employees carry out their work.	Executive Head of HR and OD	Ongoing and annual update to Corporate Equalities Group - starting January 2025	Corporate Equality Working Group
Demonstrate behaviours in line with the Employee Code of Conduct. Staff are expected to promote equality by not discriminating against anyone and by treating members of the public, colleagues, and elected members with respect.	Provide and publicise clear information on how customers can feedback on the services they have received, both positive and negative, and how we manage complaints and use them to improve,	All service areas Corporate Communications and Campaigns Lead	Review annual complaints report to assess if there is any EDI related feedback	CMT Corporate Equality Working Group
	Develop inclusive leaders by supporting managers to be confident in having courageous conversations about equality.	Executive Head of HR and OD	Annual review of CMT and SDL training and coaching to ensure inclusion is incorporated and that it is received positively, informing behaviour and actions – first review April 2025.	CMT

Watford Borough Council - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2023-27 Delivery Plan

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<p>Engage with groups in our community when making decisions about our services; and purposeful engagement with those groups where involvement is low.</p>	<p>Ensure that all council functions and services are delivered in a way that complies with statutory requirements, minimises adverse impact on any section of the community and meets (as reasonable) the needs of all local people.</p>	<p>All services</p>	<p>Annual review of where positive impacts has been achieved as part of the council's annual equality reporting – first report March 2025.</p>	<p>CMT Corporate Equality Working Group</p>
	<p>Through our Community Engagement and Participation Strategy review how we work, including our contributions to the voluntary and community sector to ensure that we are providing them with the best possible support.</p>	<p>Engagement Community of Practice</p>	<p>One of the key deliverables of the Engagement Community of Practice is to create and regularly update a repository of best practices and case studies from both within the council and external organisations to guide engagement activities.</p> <p>This repository will serve as a valuable resource, offering insights and proven strategies to enhance our engagement efforts. By maintaining and utilising this repository, we can ensure that our work is informed by the latest and most effective practices, ultimately providing our communities with the best possible support.</p>	<p>Corporate Equality Working Group</p>

Watford Borough Council - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2023-27 Delivery Plan

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	Collect relevant participation and engagement data to ensure particular groups are not under (or over) represented to inform decisions on the services we provide.	Executive Head of HR and OD Community Commissioning Lead	Review data being collected and review any areas which have equality implications – from July 2025.	Corporate Equality Working Group
	Through One Watford Place Board work towards making Watford an age-friendly town which residents and visitors of all ages can enjoy, ensuring local services are accessible to and inclusive of older people with varying needs and capacities.	One Watford Place Board Strategic initiatives	One Watford Place Board annual report – from autumn 2024.	One Watford Place Board
Consistently collect and monitor relevant equalities data from our service users so that we can understand how effective our services are reaching and improving outcomes for diverse communities.	Ensure we have an informed workforce who understand the importance of equality when making decisions through training, revised equality impact analysis and data collection	Executive Head of HR and OD	Review of training – March 2025	Corporate Equality Working Group
	Develop guidance and tools to standardise how services collect and share relevant and proportionate equalities data making sure the information we collect drives accessible and inclusive services.	Executive Head of HR and OD Business Intelligence Lead Community Commissioning Lead	Guidance and tools by January 2026	CMT Corporate Equality Working Group

Watford Borough Council - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2023-27 Delivery Plan

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WHAT WE WILL DO	HOW	RESPONSIBILITY	DELIVER AND/OR PROGRESS REPORT	REVIEWED/ MONITORED
	Ensure equality data is available to support the assessment of local need, service planning, commissioning and decision making.	Executive Head of HR and OD Business Intelligence Lead Community Commissioning Lead	Guidance and tools by January 2026	Corporate Equality Working Group
	Provide employees with training and supporting guidance to establish EIAs as an early and on-going assessment tool that are carried out robustly and consistently across the organisation.	Executive Head of HR and OD	January 2025	Corporate Equality Working Group
	Publish Equality Impact Assessments for all major decisions, projects, and initiatives, in line with our equality duties.	Executive Head of HR and OD	Ongoing and by March each year	Corporate Equality Working Group
	Ensure the council complies with reporting duties under the Equality Act 2020.	Executive Head of HR and OD	Ongoing and by March each year	Corporate Equality Working Group

Watford Borough Council - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2023-27 Delivery Plan

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<p>Ensure that commissioning and procurement arrangements comply with equalities standards and add social value to the borough</p>	<p>Ensure that the services we commission comply with equalities standards and add social value to the borough.</p>	<p>Community Commissioning</p> <p>Procurement</p>	<p>Ongoing monitoring and update to Corporate Equalities Group annual</p> <p>Equalities data is being collected from our commissioned organisations on a quarterly basis.</p>	<p>Corporate Equality Working Group</p>