Report to: Cabinet Meeting: 20 January 2025

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Rowan Cozens, Heritage Culture & the Arts

Director Lead: Deborah Johnson, Customer Services & Organisational Development

Lead Officer: Carl Burns, Business Manager – Transformation & Service Improvement, Ext. 5293

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open Report / Non-Key Decision
Report Title	Equality, Equity, Diversion and Inclusion (EEDI) Strategy - Review and Revised Strategy
Purpose of Report	To update Cabinet on the progress made through the review of our EEDI processes and to introduce the revised EEDI Strategy for approval.
Recommendations	That Cabinet: a) note the changes made to the Council's EEDI approach; and b) approve the revised Strategy, attached as Appendix A to the report.
Alternative Options Considered	None. A District Council must maintain a current Equality, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EEDI) Strategy to comply with legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, demonstrate its commitment to fairness and inclusion, and reduce risks of reputational and operational harm. It ensures policies and services are equitable, fostering trust and engagement across the community.
Reason for Recommendations	The previous EEDI Strategy was developed in 2019 and the Council have experienced significant changes in workforce, commitments and legislation since this time. Whilst the Council have maintained their commitment to operating within the framework of the Public Sector Duty, due to these changes the Strategy and associated documentation was overdue a review. This has now been completed and is presented for approval.

1.0   Background

The Council has long delivered services in alignment with the Equality Act 2010, ensuring fair and inclusive access for all residents. However, a recent audit

highlighted that while our service delivery meets statutory requirements, there were gaps in the supporting policies and procedures. In response, a new EEDI lead was appointed to undertake a comprehensive review of EEDI practices across the organisation. This review resulted in an action plan comprising 11 targeted actions, most of which have now been delivered. An overview and update on progress is provided in the report below and its appendices. Notably, one of the key actions was to review and develop the Council's EEDI strategy. This work has been completed, and the revised strategy is presented at **Appendix A** for approval.

2.0   The Revision of the EEDI Strategy

2.1   The Council adopted its most recent Equality & Diversity Strategy in 2021, which covered the period of 2021-2023. During this period, the landscape surrounding equality and diversity has evolved and there have been notable changes within our workforce. It is now appropriate to review our current approach and outline plans for Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EEDI) in Newark & Sherwood. Additionally, the Council has extended its support to specific groups, such as care leavers and armed forces personnel, aligning them with those who hold protected characteristics. The revised version on this strategy can be found at Appendix A.

3.0   The Development of the Action Plan

3.1   Following the audit report there were several actions that required delivery before we could consider ourselves fully compliant. The immediate priority was to establish an EEDI lead and a steering group to guide this area. This was quickly delivered and the steering group met for the first time in July 2025. The audit outcome was clear in its recommendations, and these were supplemented by a review undertaken by the EEDI lead, therefore an action plan was delivered for endorsement at this first meeting. The actions contained within this plan are now complete and an overview can be found at **Appendix B** of the report.

4.0   Implications
In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, Officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection; Digital & Cyber Security; Equality & Diversity; Financial; Human Resources; Human Rights; Legal; Safeguarding & Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

Implications Considered Yes – relevant and included / NA – not applicable			
Financial	NA	Equality & Diversity	Yes
Human Resources	Yes	Human Rights	Yes
Legal	Yes	Data Protection	NA
Digital & Cyber Security	Yes	Safeguarding	NA
Sustainability	NA	Crime & Disorder	NA
LGR	NA	Tenant Consultation	NA

Human Resources and Training

4.1 NSDC has long demonstrated a strong commitment to delivering equality, diversity, and inclusion through its services and day-to-day operations. The introduction of the revised EEDI Strategy serves as an overarching document, designed to bring together and reinforce the robust equalities-focused approach that is already embedded within the organisation. Rather than introducing a new direction, the strategy consolidates existing good practice, ensuring that Human Resources continue to review and refine policies, staff training, and organisational culture in line with the Council's established values. This approach will support the ongoing delivery of targeted training programmes and enhanced monitoring and reporting. HR will remain central in supporting managers and staff to further embed these principles into everyday working practices, thereby maintaining and strengthening NSDC's inclusive and equitable workplace environment.

Digital and Cyber Security

4.2 NSDC is dedicated to ensuring accessibility across all its digital platforms, recognising that effective digital and cyber security measures must be inclusive and user-friendly for everyone. Through its digital strategy, the Council actively seeks to ensure that no customer is left behind by removing barriers and promoting equal access to online services, resources, and information. The revised EEDI Strategy further strengthens this commitment by aligning organisational policies and practices with the principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion. By consolidating existing good practice and maintaining a strong focus on accessible digital solutions, NSDC ensures that its digital initiatives are developed and maintained with the needs of all users in mind, particularly those from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds. The ongoing revision our website will go further in ensuring accessibility for our residents and will be delivered in 2026. This approach not only supports compliance with legal requirements but also reinforces NSDC's values of fairness and inclusivity throughout its digital transformation journey.

Equality, Diversity & Human Rights

4.3 The revised EEDI Strategy at NSDC positively impacts the human rights of Newark & Sherwood residents by embedding the principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion into every aspect of the Council's operations. By consolidating and strengthening existing good practice, the strategy aims to ensure that policies, services, and digital platforms are accessible and fair for all, regardless of background. This inclusive approach promotes equal treatment, safeguards dignity, and supports the removal of barriers that might otherwise prevent individuals from fully participating in community life. As a result, the rights of residents to access information, receive services, and enjoy a supportive environment are protected and enhanced, reflecting NSDC's ongoing commitment to upholding human rights and fostering a culture of respect and fairness throughout the district.

Legal Implications LEG2526/3148

4.4   Cabinet is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report. The Legal Team have been consulted with the work undertaken in developing the strategy, ensuring legal obligations have been considered and met.

Background Papers and Published Documents
Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- [Audit Report - A&G Committee on Wednesday, 2 July 2025 - Item 5 Appendix B](#)
- [Equality-Diversity-Strategy-2021-23.pdf](#)