

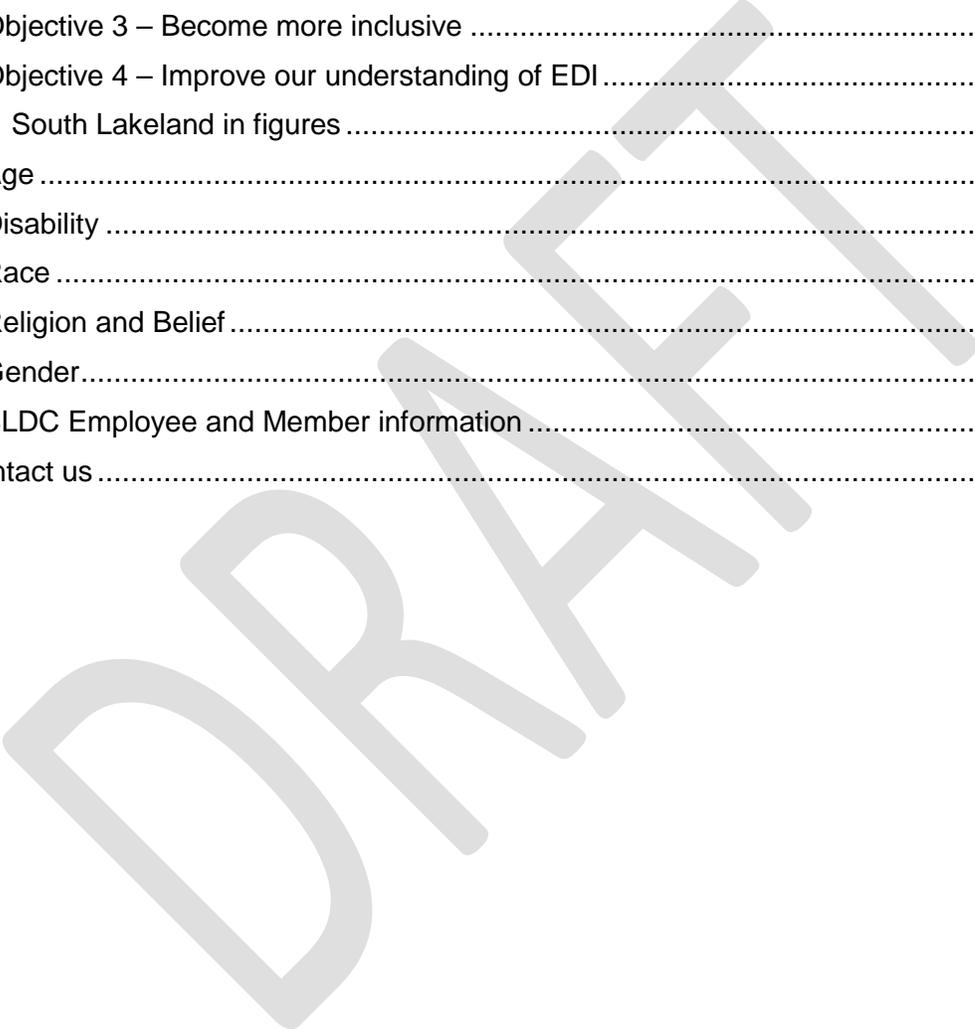
South Lakeland District Council: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
Strategy 2019 – 2022

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1. Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy

We define 'Equality' as treating all people fairly. We aim to create an environment where everyone can participate and has an equal opportunity to fulfil their potential.

We define 'Diversity' as recognising that everyone is different, whether these differences are visible or non-visible. We will respect, value and celebrate these differences.

We define 'Inclusion' as developing approaches to make all people feel welcomed and valued in South Lakeland. We will proactively challenge discrimination and exclusion and eliminate barriers.

South Lakeland District Council (SLDC), in line with the Equality Act (2010), will:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This EDI Strategy will be reviewed annually by the SLDC Overview and Scrutiny Committee to measure our performance against the [EDI objectives](#).

Protected Characteristics

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

We also include “**rurality**” and “**socio-economic disadvantage**” as additional categories. Although socio-economic status and rurality are not recognised protected characteristics under the Equality Act, people on low incomes or in rural isolation are highly likely to be affected by services that are intended to support vulnerable people.

More information about the Protected Characteristics can be found on the Equality and Human Rights Commission website:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics>

EDI Objectives

Objective 1 – Make our services accessible to all

We will improve our digital accessibility while maintaining alternative channels to accommodate customer needs.

How will we achieve this?

- create a Digital Accessibility Policy – this will include roll-out of staff training, integrating digital accessibility into procurement exercises, conforming to web accessibility framework standards, and providing assistive technology to internal and external customers as required;
- include accessibility in our Digital Strategy; and
- consultation with customers – including groups representing Protected Characteristics - throughout Customer Connect service re-design, and maintaining customer feedback group following the programme finish in 2020.

Objective 2 – Make our buildings accessible to all

We will improve the physical accessibility of our buildings.

How will we achieve this?

- complete and publish an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Places project in the Customer Connect programme;
- consult with customers and staff - including groups representing Protected Characteristics – on potential works on our buildings and make necessary changes to improve accessibility through the Customer Connect Programme;
- provide assistive technology to internal and external customers as required; and
- promote the installation of Changing Places facilities in the community and incorporate where we can within our own public buildings.

Objective 3 – Become more inclusive

We will support a diverse workforce and continuously aim to improve our inclusive environment for customers, staff and members.

How will we achieve this?

- complete and publish EIA for the People project in the Customer Connect programme;
- provide assistive technology as reasonable adjustments to internal and external customers as required; and
- maintain Disability Confident Employer status

Objective 4 – Improve our understanding of EDI

We will improve the gathering and use of EDI data on customers, staff and members, to better integrate EDI into our decision making and we will promote awareness of EDI issues.

How will we achieve this?

- maintain consultation list of EDI contacts with annual review to update;
- include EDI monitoring in Quality of Life and Staff Satisfaction Questionnaires;
- produce EIAs for all relevant decisions and key policies (e.g. Council Plan, Local Plan) and publish these on our website.
- train all staff and members on understanding EDI and best practice for EIAs; and

- publish workplace profile and gender pay gap reports annually on our website.
- implement EDI communications plan to promote key dates and events from national and local calendar.
- look to participate in and support projects and partnerships focusing on advancing EDI.
- promote EDI in our partnership working, and include EDI requirements in our procurement processes.

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2. South Lakeland in figures

The below data is the most up-to-date available at District level. Data is not available to breakdown population statistics for all Protected Characteristics.

Population - In mid-2017 South Lakeland's resident population was estimated to be 104,321¹. In 2016 18 million visitors came to South Lakeland, of which 85% were day trippers and 15% were staying visitors².

Over the last ten years the population of the district has increased by 355 residents¹.

Age

In mid-2017 it was estimated that 13.8% of the population of South Lakeland are aged 0-14 years of age, 58.5% are 15-64 years of age, and 27.7% are aged over 65¹.

Children and young people

It is projected that numbers of 0-14 year olds in South Lakeland will decrease from 2017 onwards to 2041¹. Between 2017 and 2041, the number of young people aged 0-14 is forecast to fall by 12.0%¹.

Working age

In South Lakeland the number of 15-64 year olds are projected to decrease by 8,400 (-14%) to 2041¹.

South Lakeland has the lowest proportion of young and working age people in the county and both are in decline. Since mid-2007 the greatest percentage decrease occurred in the 30-44 age groups (-23.9%)¹.

Older people

In South Lakeland numbers of residents aged 65+ are projected to increase by 8,300 persons (+28.4%) to 2041.

Since mid-2007 the greatest percentage increase occurred in the 90+ age group (+140%)¹.

Disability

18.8% of the population have a long-term health problem or disability, while 4.6% describe their general health as bad or very bad³.

Race

95.6% of South Lakeland residents are White British, 2.8% are White Other, 0.6% are mixed race, 0.8% are Asian, 0.2% are Black, and 0.1% are from other ethnic groups⁴.

Of Cumbria's six districts, South Lakeland has the second highest proportion of residents from BAME groups (4.4%).

¹ Office for National Statistics (ONS)

² STEAM Research

³ www.localhealth.org.uk/assets/Documents/Metadata_July2014.pdf

⁴ Census 2011

Religion and Belief

68% of residents are Christian, 23% have no religion. 0.4% are Buddhist, 0.2% are Muslim, 0.1% are Hindu, 0.1% are Jewish and 0.4% are members of other religions^{Error! Bookmark not defined.}

Gender

49% of residents are male, 51% are female¹.

There is a gender pay imbalance in South Lakeland, the median gross weekly earnings of a male in full time employment is £579, whereas for a female in full time employment the figure is £479².

SLDC Employee and Member information

As of 1 April 2017, SLDC employs 422 staff and has 51 councillors. The workplace profile on our website highlights the employee profile of SLDC compared with South Lakeland as a district:

<https://www.southlakeland.gov.uk/your-council/equality-and-diversity/our-workforce-profile/>

¹ Office for National Statistics (ONS)

² Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

³Census 2011

Contact us

We welcome your comments on the EDI Strategy and these will be taken into account for future versions.

Please visit the EDI page on our website to find out more information, or get in touch using the contact details below:

<https://www.southlakeland.gov.uk/your-council/equality-and-diversity/>

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