

Appendix C – results of the community engagement exercise

Feedback No.	Issue (what residents said)	Recommendation (from DWC)	Our response/comment	Action No. in Plan	Lead Area
1	Services are often predicated on the notion of managing the disabled person condition, leaving little room for supporting people to develop and providing stimulation challenge for them.	Include disabled people and their families in the planning of services, not bring them into the conversation as an after-thought.	<p>We have a process to include people with disabilities in the planning and evaluation of new and existing services through impact analysis and assessments and our targeted approach to consultation.</p> <p>As referred to in action 3.16 of the EDI Strategy Action Plan, the Community Services Team will produce a stakeholder list that represents all protected characteristics including disability (and includes for example the Making It Real Board) to support service areas when service planning and carrying out engagement. We will endeavour to promote awareness of this and include in our engagement toolkits for future reference.</p>	3.16	Community Services
2	There is a stark lack of visibility of any disabled council officers.	Council should lead on being Disability Confident	<p>New action</p> <p>As an actively inclusive employer of disabled people, by September 2023 we will progress from our status as a Disability Confident Employer to a Disability Confident Leader.</p>	2.12	Human Resources
3	Community initiatives are sometimes encouraged to get started but there is little support for them to develop and grow.	Council should work with providers to ensure that major festivals like the Balloon Festival are accessible to people with complex needs. Big festivals should be a showcase for accessibility.	<p>Improvements have been made to the accessibility of the Balloon Fiesta, these include improved disabled viewing areas and alternative methods of viewing the fiesta, steward support for audience members who require this, accessible toilets and access to changing spaces.</p> <p>New action</p> <p>It is recognised that a comprehensive review of the accessibility of events (including physical access and access to information) is required and this is currently being planned to take place in Autumn 2022. Please refer to action 4.4 in the EDI Strategy Action plan.</p>	4.4	Events Team

			We will also continue to promote our Community E-News for community groups to join our mailing lists to keep them informed of our support services and funding opportunities available.		Community Services
4	Inaccessible Venues.	Where council owns venues, it should insist on better accessibility – why is there no SEND ice-skating provision in the ice rink during school holidays?	<p>The Facilities Management Team continue to conduct accessibility audits on council-owned buildings, as per best practice guidance and make reasonable adjustments as necessary.</p> <p>Customer Service Points (i.e. Reception areas and first points) and staff training are currently being reviewed to ensure improved accessibility.</p> <p>In terms of the SEND sessions at the ice rink explicitly mentioned within the feedback received, the plan is to continue to deliver these during the school holidays through the development of a new inclusive leisure strategy.</p>		BiT/Facilities Management Team Customer Experience Leisure Services
5	Inclusive and culturally sensitive services for example meeting the needs of Muslim girls and women, after-school clubs and a broader range of activities for women and girls.	EDI needs to be a central planning consideration before the council embarks on designing or delivering any initiative/service. It currently feels like consideration of diversity is an after-thought not a requirement.	<p>All council services consider the needs of customers and service users as part of service planning. We do this via our targeted approach to consultation and through impact analysis and assessments.</p> <p>In relation to swimming specifically, we currently offer some women-only swimming sessions, for more information, please visit our leisure website at https://www.telfordandwrekinleisure.co.uk/info/4/swimming</p> <p>As this has been identified as a gap, we will ensure this is investigated further as part of the new inclusive leisure strategy.</p>		Organisational Development & Education Leisure Services

6	Equalities are spread across different departments which does not work.	EDI needs to be 'baked into' all council officers' roles and made central to the business of the council.	<p>Corporately, EDI is led by Cllr Kelly Middleton (Cabinet Member for Leisure, Public Health and Well-being, Equalities and Partnerships) and at Officer level by Jo Britton (Executive Director of Children's Services).</p> <p>Whilst we have corporate leads and some dedicated officers for EDI, it is the responsibility of all Members and staff to act fairly and provide inclusive services. We have a number of actions within the EDI Strategy Action Plan that support this through training, recruitment, performance monitoring, employee groups, governance, impact assessments, decision-making, etc. please refer to page 18 of the EDI Strategy which details the action plan.</p>		
7	A lot of good work is being done by the Multicultural Development Team which can have wider implication for the whole council, but the Team's brief is restricted to schools.	EDI would benefit from being led centrally and co-ordinated by a Central EDI Policy Head.	As above, corporately, EDI is led by Cabinet level by Cllr Kelly Middleton (Cabinet Member for Leisure, Public Health and Well-being, Equalities and Partnerships) and at Officer level by Jo Britton (Executive Director of Children's Services). It is the responsibility of all Members and staff to act fairly and provide inclusive services.		
8	EDI should not be seen as just the responsibility of the Human Resources department.	It would be helpful to have a map of where all the EDI expertise lies in the council.	<p>EDI is not just the responsibility of Human Resources. We have dedicated EDI Officers and a range of services across the Council that work on this agenda.</p> <p>New action We will create a new EDI structure chart for publication on the Council's website to make it clear who is involved.</p>	2.13	Community Services

9	The way neuro-diverse people engage in meetings can be used against them as a reason to keep them out of debates. Council officers, in particular, need to show more consideration and flexibility in how they engage with disabled people.	There needs to be disability training for all council officers.	A review of the EDI-related training offer across the Council is currently already taking place to ensure up to date training and advice is available to officers to embed knowledge and improve practice. Please see actions 2.18-2.22 in the EDI Strategy Action Plan.	2.18-2.22	
10	Neuro diversity is not understood or recognised by managers and some respond poorly to their legal responsibility to make reasonable adjustments.	An appeal system for employees who are denied reasonable adjustments ought to be in place.	<p>The Resolving Workplace Issues policy provides a mechanism for agreement and dispute resolution regarding reasonable adjustments.</p> <p>New Action We will explore the concept of a register of reasonable adjustments, or similar document and involve our neuro diverse employee network as part of this, to evidence types of adjustments made across the authority and equity of delivery. Please see action number 2.14 in the EDI Strategy Action Plan.</p>	2.14	Human Resources

11	There needs to be a full audit of council services and buildings to ensure accessibility. (Linked to this there was a comment made that the council's web W3C accessibility does not follow the accessibility guidelines)	Making reasonable adjustments for staff should not be left to individual managers in the council. There needs to be oversight on this and an appeals mechanism where disabled people can seek redress for their rights being curtailed.	<p>As above - the Resolving Workplace Issues policy provides a mechanism for agreement and dispute resolution regarding reasonable adjustments.</p> <p>Regarding web accessibility - we recently carried out an audit of our web presence including the accessibility standards. For more information, please see a copy of our accessibility statement which sets out the actions we will take and the timeframe in which we aim to achieve compliance, available here: www.telford.gov.uk/accessibility.</p>		Human Resources Corporate Communications
12	There are 75,000 deaf people across Shropshire. Some respondents felt the needs of D/deaf and hearing-impaired are easily forgotten when it comes to EDI.	The Independent Living Centre has a great facility which can be better utilised to support the D/deaf and hearing-impaired community.	<p>There is ongoing dialogue with the D/deaf and hearing-impaired community more generally to ensure their needs are considered in council services.</p> <p>A BSL trainer is creating a short film for the Independent Living Centre to explain in BSL what the facility is, this will be used for promotion and will also be subtitled.</p>		ASC Prevention & Independence, Older Adults & Disability
13	Council services are not responsive to the needs of deaf and hearing-impaired people.	The Independent Living Centre should be promoted as a hub for hearing impaired people as it has a great facility which can be better utilised to support the deaf and impaired community.	<p>All key staff at the Independent Living Centre have undertaken basic BSL training to ensure that those for whom BSL is a first language can have their needs met. This is being shared with the deaf community and beyond.</p> <p>In addition to this, we will ensure our translation and interpretation services are fully promoted to staff and ensure all council services are aware of the correct processes and procedures involved.</p>		Community Services
14	There is a stigma attached to being hearing-impaired and many people conceal their impairment.	The Sunflower lanyard shows support for the D/deaf and hearing-impaired community, the council should include this in their annual celebrations.	<p>Promotion of disability awareness schemes to employees and service users including training is already referenced within the Guidance for Customer Service Excellence which has been shared across the organisation.</p> <p>New action</p>	2.22	Customer Experience

			We will review the current Customer Services training which is in development to ensure further information around working with the D/deaf and hearing-impaired community is included and review the addition of this to other training sessions around hidden disabilities too.		
15	The community sector can often respond quickly to crises; one such example in Arlestone is the setting up of food banks during the pandemic	Resources are always a challenge, and it takes a lot of commitment to provide community facilities and keep them going. There needs to be more funding for meetings and events that bring people together (inclusion requires people being together and arriving at a common agreement on living side by side).	The Community Services Team provide a range of community grants and funding opportunities as well as other aspects of support for all its communities. Please visit www.telford.gov.uk/communitysupport . We will continue to monitor and review these opportunities and welcome applications from groups that aim to support EDI and community cohesion.		Community Services
16	There are aspects of the council's vision document which require up to date figures to support their position. The perspective of older people needs to come through the narrative.	The narrative of the council's EDI Vision and Strategy need to reflect the needs of an ageing population.	We have expanded the demographics in our EDI Strategy - section ' 3.1 Our Community ' to include more information including population age. It is worth noting that the latest census data will become available later this year therefore this will be updated in line with the annual review. Data around Protected Characteristics is updated on a regular basis, with more details available at www.telford.gov.uk/factsandfigures		Community Services

17	<p>Youth anti-social behaviour is often an indicator of the lack of activities available to engage young people. The response in Woodside has been to build a skatepark and a BMX track. These initiatives are not a panacea, but they go some way to meeting the needs of young people.</p>	<p>It is worth rethinking the wisdom of funding second tier organisations and navigators to deliver direct services to communities. It may be better to upskill grassroots organisations to do the work.</p>	<p>We already work with partners on this agenda, however, we welcome the opportunity to explore how more of this can be done in the future.</p> <p>We are working with voluntary and third sector partnerships to have an extended offer of youth provision to meet the needs of children and young people involved in gang related violence, anti-social/criminal behaviour is being addressed through the work of: Building Safer Stronger Communities Board. Youth provision is being mapped at ward level to understand where further investment is required to meet the needs of all children & young people across the borough.</p> <p>The Council also works with a range of providers, including community groups, to offer the Happy, Healthy, Active Holiday scheme. This offers activities to young people eligible for free school meals, as well as other indicators of need, for four days in the Christmas holidays, four days in the Easter holidays and 16 days in the summer holidays. All providers offer physical activity, enrichment activities, nutritious meals and education on healthy eating. The range of providers offer activities aimed at diverse groups including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities as well as culturally appropriate provision, including a focus on halal food. For more information, please see the website Happy Healthy & Active Holidays - Telford & Wrekin Council</p> <p>There is also the work we are doing to keep young people busy and active through our 10 x 10 scheme and an ambition to ensure that all children in the borough have the best start in life. The scheme encourages children to take part in 10 life enhancing activities by the time they are 10 years of age. For more information please visit https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/21813/10_by_10</p>		<p>Community Services Safer Stronger Communities Team Education and Skills Children's Services</p>
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18	Strengthening families work could be greatly improved. It is difficult to find culturally competent provision for Black children and families in Telford and Wrekin.	Family connect web needs to be improved and made more culturally sensitive.	This information has been forwarded to the Strengthening Families Team for further consideration. In addition, a review of the EDI-related training offer across the Council is currently taking place to ensure up to date training and advice is available to officers to further embed and improve knowledge and practice. This includes training around cultural competency and sensitivity. Please see actions 2.18-2.22 in the EDI Strategy Action Plan.	2.18-2.22	Human Resources
19	There is an absence of Black men being appointed to positions in the council.	There is a need for positive action to address under-representation. Black staff should have access to mentoring and development to progress.	We have updated action number 2.9 in our EDI Strategy Action Plan to include mentoring and development, as such the action now states: Review talent management programmes across the Council – prioritising staff from under-represented groups to attend mentoring, development and Leadership Programmes to help increase diversity.	2.9	Organisational Development

20	Cultural competence is low amongst social workers and service providers which results in black service users either being placed in culturally insensitive care homes or sent outside Telford and Wrekin where they are isolated from their family.	The care sector has to be made sensitive to the needs of Black and Asian service users. The council has the power to insist upon improvement as part of its contracting with providers.	New action We will review performance measures in Contracting, Commissioning/Adult Social Care Contracting and the training needs of Brokerage and Contracting staff to ensure rigorous monitoring.	2.23	Commissioning, Procurement & Brokerage
21	Armed Forces Covenant feedback	<p>The Armed Forces community is identified as a distinct group and becomes a key consideration in the Council's governance and decision-making process when developing policies and strategies.</p> <p>All front-line staff to routinely ask customers whether they are a current or ex-member of the Armed Forces, related to, or a carer of either.</p> <p>Armed Forces Leads, in key service areas, are identified to work with the Armed Forces Covenant Co-ordinator.</p>	<p>The Armed Forces Covenant duty was enacted in December 2021 however statutory guidance is yet to be issued. We recommend waiting until this has been published and we are clearer on what is required before going any further.</p> <p>New Action Recognition of Armed Forces personnel – following the Armed Forces Covenant Duty being enacted in December 2021, we will monitor the guidance and add any additional actions to the EDI Strategy Action Plan as required.</p>	3.2	<p>Community Services and Policy & Development</p> <p>Community Services</p>

