

<b>Meeting</b>	OLC Board	<b>Agenda Item No.</b>	12
		<b>Paper No.</b>	119.9
<b>Date of meeting</b>	31 March 2022	<b>Time required</b>	20 Minutes

<b>Title</b>	<b>ED&amp;I update</b>
<b>Sponsor</b>	Paul McFadden, Chief Ombudsman. Delivered by Nikki Sinclair, EDI Manager
<b>Status</b>	OFFICIAL
<b>To be communicated to:</b>	Members and those in attendance

<b>Executive summary</b>
The purpose of this paper is to provide a summary update of activities and progress on work delivered for EDI themes and share the high level draft EDI Strategy and action plan.
<b>Recommendation/action required</b>
<p>Board are asked to note the EDI Paper and;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Approve</b> high level EDI Strategy and action plan</li> <li>• <b>Note</b> inclusive leadership workshops for wider leadership team</li> </ul>

# ED&I update

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## Background

The 4 key themes below ensures we keep focus on embedding the EDI agenda into LeO and building a culture of inclusivity into everything we do:

- Strategy & Policy
- Building our community
- Diversity & Inclusion training
- EDI Reporting

## Strategy & Policy

### EDI Steering Group

The EDI steering group held it's first meeting on March 2022. The EDI manager shared outcomes from the consultation process, recommendations following EDI data analysis and resulting draft high level EDI strategy. Feedback from the group supported alignment of activities with corporate strategies. It was recognised that there is a strong link and dependency between EDI strategy and People Plan and it was encouraged that this was made clear in the actin plan deliverables and ownership of some of the activities There was also recognition that the EDI manager will need to be clear on what can be achieved over the next 3 years, prioritising some of the quick wins and those with the biggest impact. EDI manager was also asked to think about how to access support and resource from across the organization to deliver the 3 year plan. The EDI manager also stressed the importance of having a clear vision for the EDI strategy that demonstrates LeO commitment to building an inclusive organisation.

A key recommendation from the group was to go consult with staff on the vision which is key to the future development of employee engagement on diversity & inclusion

## EDI Strategy

### Outcome of EDI consultation

There were 6 focus groups held over December 2021, 3 with the staff network groups and 3 open to all staff across the organisation. The sessions explored the experience of LeO colleagues in respect to inclusion and focused on 4 areas; respect, belonging, empowerment and progression, (appendix 1).

Key outcomes identified:

- Respect– there was clear disparity between BAME & Disability & Carers network members who did not feel comfortable in feeling themselves compared to the rest of the organisation who felt happy or did not feel they had to downplay who they were.
- Belonging – there was a general consensus of not feeling valued at work, many felt there was a lack of cohesion between different departments and there was a need for improvement in the way LeO leadership team communicates inclusively. However some did say they some of this was a result of the sudden move to working from home and therefore felt distant from peers.
- Empowerment & progression– there was clear agreement that there were barriers around the opportunity to progress careers. Whilst some felt management were supportive there was also a view that there was a lack of training or time to develop skills and limited opportunities to progress.

A full summary will be provided to the Chair of the EDI steering group and detailed comments have been shared with the Executive Team.

All feedback has had a direct impact on the EDI action plan and deliverables and will also link directly to the People Strategy.

A high level 3 year EDI strategy has been drafted which outlines our approach, identifies where we need to improve and high level action plan (appendix 2).

### **Diversity & Inclusion training**

#### **Inclusive leadership workshop**

Following the successful delivery of the inclusive leadership workshop, Board and Executive Team supported the recommendation to roll this out to the wider leadership team consisting of management team, team leaders and L2 ombudsman. This workshop has a slightly different angle with more practical objectives around delivery, performance and the employee life cycle.

- Understand why building an inclusive culture is important to LeO's performance and growth
- Reflect on how bias plays out in the employee experience and lifecycle (recruitment, performance management, progression)
- Explore actions managers could take to advance inclusion

This will be delivered over 3 workshops, the first will be on 24 March 2022 and the following 2 will be delivered in April & May.

### **Neurodiversity Training**

Some key feedback from the EDI consultation noted that LeO needs to have a more informed approach around understanding neurodiversity in the workplace. We are in the process of procuring training for colleagues across the organisation to provide a more inclusive approach to how we support our neurodivergent staff and customers.

## **Building Our Community**

In February we celebrated Race Equality Week by launching 2 initiatives :

- The Big promise which was a commitment to action not just words, that involved making a public commitment to race equality to create a positive change that is measurable and to which one would be held accountable. We shared the Board and Exec teams promises on our social platforms. The EDI manager will work with both on our approach on how they demonstrate their commitment over the next financial year.
- #Myname is an effective initiative about saying a persons name 'correctly' to ensure they feel accepted, included and that they belong in the workplace and wider. We encouraged all of LeO's people to use phonetic spelling alongside names (forename and surname) to be added to communication channels such as emails and on teams.

We also celebrated LGBTQ+ History Month with articles and blogs shared in our weekly newsletter, but most notably we collaborated with PHSO and LGO LGBTQ+ networks to deliver an inter-ombudsman 'Ask me anything' event with panel members from all 3 organisations. The event was a great success with many useful resources and links shared during the event.

In May the EDI Manager will be co chairing the first Ombudsman Association EDI steering group consisting of over 16 senior leaders from across the sector. The objectives of this steering group is to encourage collaborative working around strategic approach to EDI, sharing knowledge, best practice and resource around learning and development.

The Board are asked to:

- Approve high level EDI Strategy and action plan
- Note inclusive leadership workshops for wider leadership team

**Nikki Sinclair**

**LeO EDI Manager**

## Focus Group - Identify any barriers to inclusion at LeO

### Opening (5 minutes)

Facilitator role: to gather information regarding each participant's experience with respect to inclusion. Inclusive work settings are workplaces where;

- employees feel respected
- employees experience a sense of belonging
- employees are empowered to contribute to work processes
- employees have a fair chance of progressing their careers

This session will explore the experience of LeO colleagues across 4 areas: Respect, Belonging, Empowerment and Progression asking participants to respond across a series of questions in each area. Follow up questions can be asked, but only in order to clarify so that we are able to use the findings of focus groups to make positive change.

### *Session Fundamentals*

1. **Confidentiality:** what happens during the Focus Group must remain confidential. Participants agree not to discuss anything that occurs during the focus group with anyone outside the meeting.
2. **Communication:** Commit to share openly and honestly - and to listen fully and with empathy.
3. **Non-judgemental behaviour:** Become an observer of life and not decide if a behaviour or expression is right or wrong. Being non-judgmental makes people more likely to be honest, with less hostile conversation, and can open your mind to other people's thoughts and viewpoints.
4. **Privacy:** Specific individuals or roles should not be named or referred to during the course of discussion.

**\*\*Ask each individual to verbally confirm they will adhere to the Fundamentals\*\***

### Discussion Questions (40 minutes)

#### *Respect (10 minutes)*

1. Do you feel comfortable being yourself at work and that your unique attributes, characteristics, skills, experience and background are valued? Why or why not?
2. Are there aspects of your social identity that you feel you need to keep separate from the workplace? If yes, why?
3. Do you mask or downplay any aspect of your physical, cultural, spiritual or emotional self at work? If yes, why?

#### *Belonging (10 minutes)*

1. Do you feel that you belong at LeO? Why or why not?
2. Do you feel that you a valued and essential part of your team? Why or why not?
3. Do you ever feel left out at work - either when engaging in work activities or socially? If yes, why?

***Empowered (10 minutes)***

1. Have you faced any obstacles in your career progression or ability to participate fully in work processes that are not experienced by all your colleagues? Describe those obstacles.
2. What could your employer do to better support you?
3. Do you feel that you have sufficient support to develop your skills and progress your career? If no, why not?
4. Can you identify people similar to yourself in leadership positions at your organisation?

***Progression (10 minutes)***

1. Have you faced or witnessed prejudice or discrimination in your work setting? Describe what happened.
2. What characteristics, traits, contributions, and behaviours are most valued and rewarded at your organisation?
3. What/who do you need to do or know to get ahead at work?

***Open Time (10 minutes)***

Any opportunity to share any thoughts that haven't been covered in the previous sections that you think are important for LeO to be aware of when we consider what the challenges are to diversity and inclusion.

***Closing (5 minutes)***

Next steps.

How we will use the information from the focus groups.

02 March 2022

# EDI Strategy Update March 2022

Nikki Sinclair

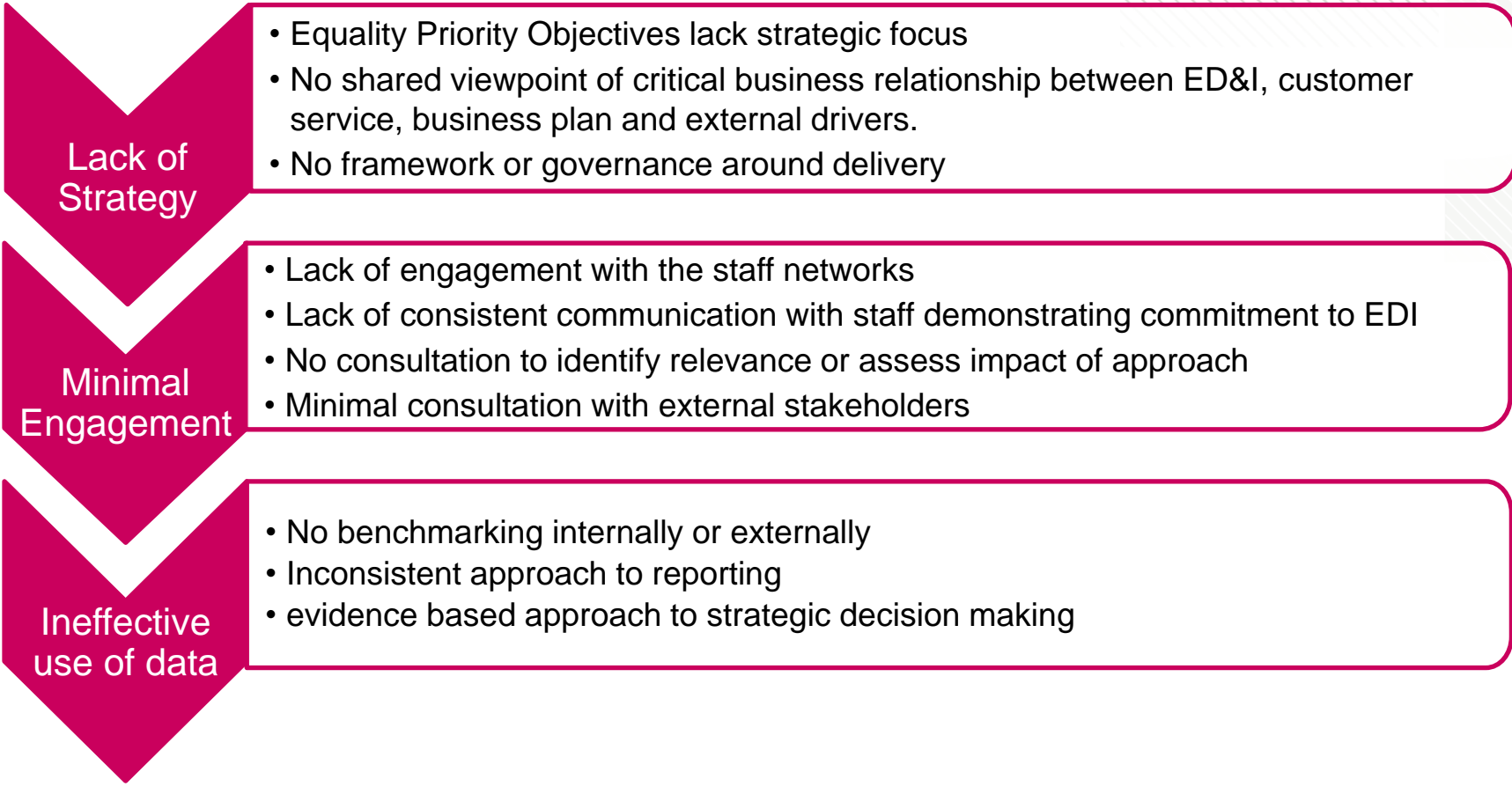
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Manager

# Our Vision

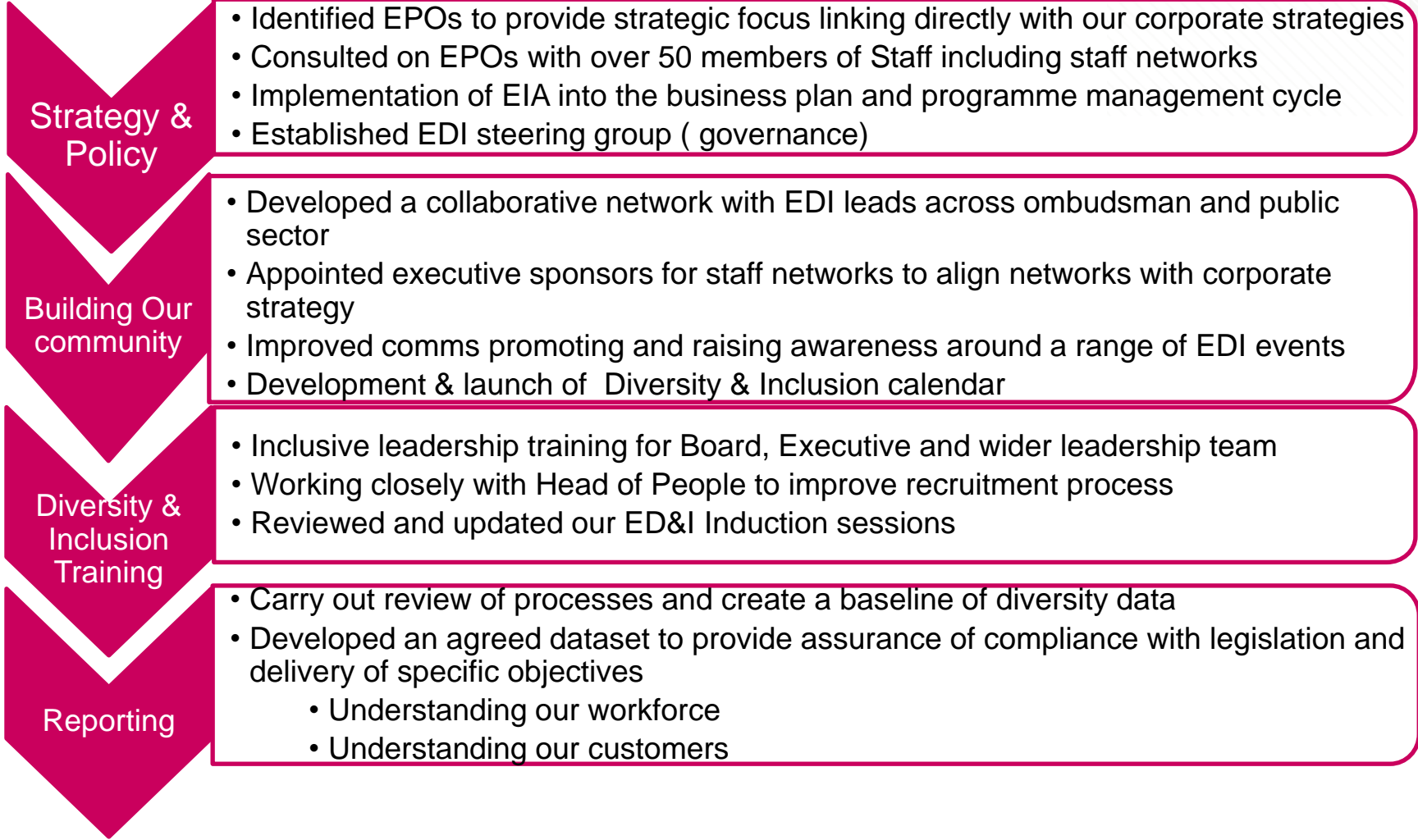
- Civil Service – becoming the most inclusive employer
- Civil Service 2022-2025 – Promoting fairness and performance
- LeO is committed to promoting equality diversity and inclusion for our customers
- What is our vision for LeO as an organization?
  - A great place to work for everyone
  - A place where people feel respected, included and can be their best
  - A place where we recognise and celebrate our differences



# Looking Back



# EDI Strategy – What did we do?



# Proposed EPOs

## REPRESENTATIVE WORKFORCE:

By 2023, we will be working towards increasing the diversity of our workforce at all levels to reflect the community where our office is based and the customers we serve

## INCLUSIVE PLACE TO WORK:

By 2023, Provide an accessible and inclusive working environment and culture where all staff are treated fairly, are able to perform to best of their ability and get support in developing and growing their careers

## CUSTOMER SERVICE & ACCESSIBILITY:

By 2023, The needs and rights of people who shared protected characteristics are at the forefront of the design and delivery of our service

### Measure:

Through employment and recruitment diversity data, civil service people survey, staff surveys

### Measure:

Through customer EDI data, customer satisfaction & service complaints

### Engagement:

Focus groups, Safe Space, Staff networks, Surveys, Team meetings  
External stakeholder groups, OLC focus group, Interrogate the data, Benchmarking

# Where do we want to be

- We want to continue developing a positive and inclusive culture
- Embedding activity in our EDI strategic priorities will enable successful delivery of our corporate objectives set out in People Strategy and Business Plan
- Work towards mainstreaming the delivery of inclusion
- Strategy is essential to deliver our shared ambition of becoming an inclusive service and an employer of choice where our values are to serve with integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality
- We want to become a skilled, innovative and ambitious organization equipped for the future

# Representative Workforce

## What did we do

- Analysed workforce demographic data
- Extracted recruitment data for last financial year for analysis
- Focus groups to understand how our people
- Gender Pay Gap report

## Gaps

- Many of the staff networks did not see representation of themselves in leadership positions
- Lack of representation for BAME, Disability & LGBTQ+ Grade B & above
- Females are underrepresented in upper quartile and overrepresented in lower quartile of pay
- Limited understanding of recruitment process and impact on attracting diverse talent group to LeO

# Representative Workforce

Commitment & measures	Year	Corporate Plans
Collect regular data to understand the demographic of our workforce at all levels to drive change	2022-2025	People Strategy
Complete full recruitment bench marking exercise to understand if there is any bias in our recruitment process	2022-2023(Y1)	People Strategy
Review end to end recruitment process Expect all recruitment agencies to promote diversity and present diverse applicant pools Develop recruitment & attraction Strategy	2022-2024	People Strategy
.Develop promotion and talent strategy ( <b>speak to Deb</b> ) Support for staff to pursue leadership roles, especially where there is under representation as part of aspiring leadership programme	2022-2024	People Strategy
Recruitment training across the organization to ensure they have tools and skills to deliver recruitment and selection processes so free from bias and encourage best practice	2022-2025	People Strategy
Ensure that external presentation of organization represent diversity	2022-2023 (Y1)	EDI Strategy/ network groups
Identify a variety of media sources and advertisement platforms to provide access to the most diverse pool of talent possible and our vacancies will use inclusive language, diverse imagery and will be accessible	2022-2025	E

# Representative Workforce

Commitment & measures	Year	Corporate Plans
Continue our progress to achieve gender balance and address under representation of women in senior roles	2022-2025	EDI Strategy/People Strategy
Achieve Disability Confident L2 by March 2023 and achieve L3 by March 2024 to understand the needs of our employees with a disability and ensure our recruitment processes and workplaces are accessible and inclusive	2022-2023	People Strategy/ Disability & Carers Network
Ensure our ethnicity data is robust and publish our first ethnicity pay gap report	2025	People Strategy/BAME Network

# Inclusive Place/culture

## What did we do

- Consulted on inclusion and belonging as part of focus groups
- Analysed results of people survey in relation to inclusion, bullying, harassment
- Equality Impact assessment of all new and reviewed HR policies
- Created and EDI Calendar, delivered and promoted a number of diverse and inclusive events through multiple communication channels to
- Monitored EDI as part of interim reward and recognition
- Assigned executive sponsors to staff networks to provide alignment to corporate objectives and to support, promote and raise awareness of specific issues
- Deliver inclusive leadership training to our Board & Executive Team
- Established EDI steering group to provide governance and support in delivery of EDI strategy

## Gaps

- Understanding of intersectionality on our staff and impact on inclusion and belonging
- Need to improve opportunity for career progression & development for our people
- A third of our people with a disability feel unsupported in relation to workplace adjustments
- No visibility of an organisational approach to actively champion diversity and inclusion and role model inclusive and ethical behaviours in everyday interactions
- Analysis of grievances or informal grievances related to discrimination, bullying, harassment



# Embedding inclusion

Commitments & Measures	Year	Corporate Plans
Deliver Inclusive Leadership Training for all leaders	2022-2025	People Strategy
Implement safe space workshops to give our people opportunity to respectfully ask questions and share their experience	2022-2023(Y1)	People Strategy
Develop an annual programme of EDI awareness activities for our people which includes learning opportunities	2022-2024	EDI Strategy/People Strategy
Development of full 360 feedback model following actions from civil service people survey and consultation around inclusion, bullying, harassment & monitor track report employee grievance in relation to same issues	2022-2025	People Strategy
Develop maturity of our staff networks by working closely with executive sponsors by reviewing and developing clear action plan/vision for each network (RAP, Stonewall, Disability Confident) Development of network chairs	2022-2025	EDI Strategy/network groups
Launch a women's network	2022-2023	EDI Strategy/network groups
Senior leaders will be mentored as part of reverse mentoring programme to increase awareness and competency in becoming a more inclusive leader.	2022-2025	EDI Strategy/People Strategy/Business Plan

# Embedding inclusion

Commitments & Measures	Year	Corporate Plans
Working group for remote workers to promote inclusion	2022-2023	EDI Strategy/People Strategy
Develop an LGBTQ Action plan using Stonewall feedback to rank in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index	2022-2025	EDI Strategy/People Strategy
Continue to deliver Race Action Plan and commit to race equality code	2022-2025	EDI Strategy/People Strategy
Review of HR policies and procedures to ensure gender neutral language	2022-2023	People Strategy
Analyse staff on performance plans by demographics to understand if there are barriers around learning, development and skills	2022-2024	EDI Strategy/People Strategy

# Accessible Service

## What did we do

- Analysed Vulnerable customers and Reasonable adjustments data
- Reviewed RA process across the customer journey
- Customer satisfaction by demographics
- Customer outcomes by demographics
- Service complaints by demographics

## Gaps

- Inconsistent approach to applying RA to our customers
- Limited customer insight on accessing our service by demographics
  - Website
  - Emails/letters
  - calls
- Limited understanding of service complaints by demographics
- Limited knowledge impact of service delivery on customer outcomes by demographics
- Limited use of customer satisfaction data to improve service delivery

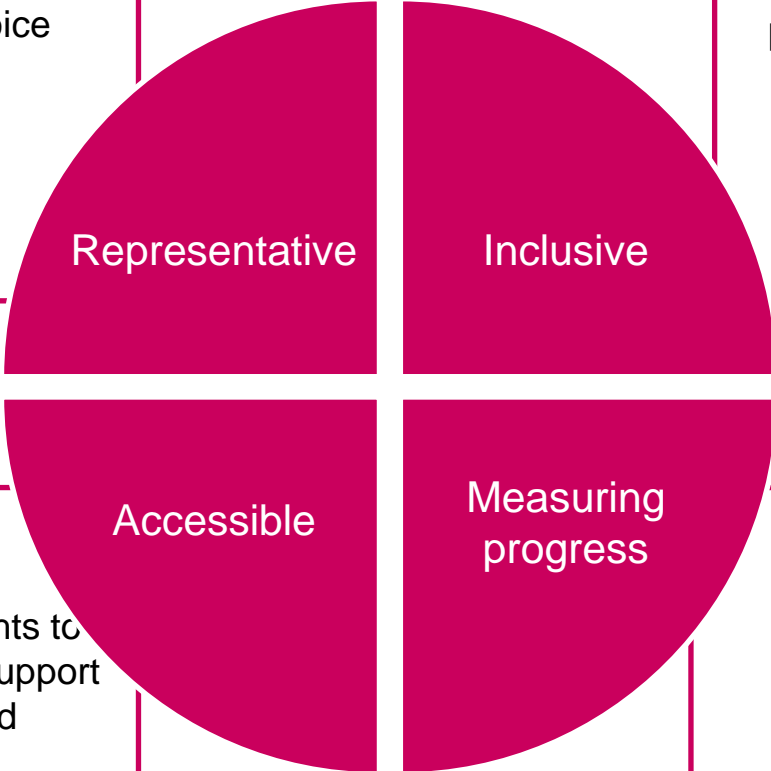
# Improving accessibility

Commitments & Measures	Year	Corporate Plans
Analyze demographic data of current complaints to understand barriers to engagement through different aspects of our service	2022-2024	Business Plan Priority 1
Full review of Reasonable Adjustments Process & Guidance	2022-2023	Business Plan Priority 1
Review of our website, guidance and comms channels (emails, letters, calls)	2023-2024	Business Plan
Engage with customers using customer on impact assessments for changes to our service and processes Ensure that equalities implications inform policy formulation and decision making from the start of the process	2022-2025	Business Plan
Identify opportunities to link directly with regulators and our service providers to effectively improve our feedback to the profession, particularly service providers with protected characteristics	2022-2025	Business plan priority 3
Provide our people with annual accessibility training (RA governance)	2022-2025	EDI Strategy/ network groups
Monitor service complaints by demographics to follow any inequality or discrimination	2022-2025	EDI Strategy
Thematic reviews of outcomes by demographics to have a better understanding of barriers that impact resolution	2022-2025	Business Plan priority 1/ EDI Strategy
Regular external comms explaining how we are embedding EDI in everything we do	2022-2025	EDI Strategy

# Link to corporate strategies

- Becoming an employer of Choice
- Developing our people
  - Recruitment strategy
  - Attraction Strategy

- To support our people to increase performance
  - Engaging our people
  - Supporting Our people
  - Creating a positive workplace culture



- Developing learning and insights to increase impact of work and support improvement for the sector and customers
- Customers at forefront of service redesign and delivery

- EDI steering group
- EQIAs
- 6 monthly tracker of inclusion questions from people survey
- 360 Feedback from staff networks and staff across the organisation
- Monitor customer satisfaction
- Achieving legal compliance (gender pay gap), PSED
- Development of EDI KPIs