

London Councils Corporate Race Equality Strategy 2022-25



CONTENTS

FOREWORD P3

SCENE SETTING P4

introduction

delivering the shared ambitions

aligning the strategy with our organisational values

our race equality journey so far

taking this work forward

OUR RACE EQUALITY JOURNEY 2020-2022 P8

MAKING RACE EQUALITY PART OF OUR DNA P9

our behaviours on race equality

our ambitions and outcomes on race equality

MAKING IT STICK P12

evaluation and monitoring

next steps and resourcing

EVIDENCE BASE P17

london's demography

workforce picture

ethnicity headcount of overall workforce

ethnic composition of workforce by grade

ethnicity pay gap

race and inclusivity survey findings

all staff race equality workshop findings

black asian and minority ethnic staff focus group

conclusions

GLOSSARY P27

FOREWORD

I am delighted to introduce our Corporate Race Equality Strategy 2022-25 which sets out our journey, as an organisation, to embed race equality in all we do.

London is the most diverse and multicultural city in Europe. We are proud of this diversity – it is central to our city’s vibrancy, energy and prosperity. For a while London boroughs have continued to progress and develop ways to better harness this multiculturalism and support our diverse communities and their needs. London Councils, as an organisation that represents and provides a collective voice for London and Londoners, needs to be clear on how we will contribute to existing action to tackle racial injustice but also determine how we can lead by example.

This strategy is our response to the racial injustice we continue to see in our society and within London. For us, and many other sectors and organisations, this journey really kickstarted with the murder of George Floyd and the subsequent extremely clear drive from colleagues at London Councils to establish our organisational role in tackling racial inequality.

The strategy has been driven and developed by staff, for staff. Colleagues within our internal Race Equality Working Group have done a fantastic job of establishing an overarching ambition and set of outcomes that reflect staff aspirations and what they expect of London Councils, and has been developed by drawing upon the excellent work we have seen across boroughs and our partner organisations.

I am extremely proud of the journey we have undertaken so far but there much more to do. This strategy outlines the progress we need to, and seek to make in order to strive to becoming an anti-racist organisation. However, the strategy is a guide – a statement of intent. The next three years will be vital as we deliver our outcomes to ensure London Councils is an organisation that understands racial inequality and our role in addressing this; is proactive in challenging racial injustice and is an organisation where all staff, regardless of their background, can thrive.

In many ways we are still in a society and broader environment where organisational action dedicated to race equality is considered radical or unique – we want it to be normalised. We want race equality to be a consistent part of our everyday thinking and operations. That is why this strategy is for everyone in the organisation, both in supporting our individual race equality journeys but also in delivering our organisational ambitions.



Ali Griffin
Chief Executive
London Councils

“We want race equality to be a consistent part of our everyday thinking and operations”

SCENE SETTING

Introduction

Over the next three years London Councils strives to become an organisation where race equality is at the heart of everything we do. This means, race equality is active in the way we operate, in our work for London and Londoners and in the way we work with our partners and stakeholders. Our Corporate Race Equality Strategy 2022 – 25 outlines the organisations commitments and ambitions on race equality, describing our plan to ensure it is embedded within London Councils.

The case for us to adapt and improve as an organisation stems from the series of significant events that have brought the need and urgency to address racial injustice to the fore. The murder of George Floyd, the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement and the disproportionate impact of Covid on Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority communities have each amplified the racial disparities that have continued to exist in our society. London is the most diverse city in Europe - our ethnic and cultural diversity is central to our city and essential to enabling our communities to thrive and prosper. London

Councils, through our role as a convenor, collaborator and representative of London boroughs and London's communities, have a responsibility to meet the expectations and ambitions set within the capital to harness our diversity and deliver change on this agenda. This strategy describes the journey we seek to make to support and facilitate this change and the goals we want to achieve.

London boroughs have been increasingly proactive on race equality. Therefore, we must also demonstrate how we will intend to lead by example and use learning from borough organisations and partners to shape our organisation. Our Corporate Race Equality Strategy will detail how we will put this into practice.



Delivering the Shared Ambitions

In October 2021 we agreed shared ambitions, developed by group Leaders of London Councils, for London and Londoners. These shared ambitions, as outlined in the diagrams opposite, drive our work, how we operate and what we strive to deliver for London.

The contribution of our Corporate Race Equality Strategy 2022 – 2025 does not exist in isolation, rather it seeks to help us ensure we deliver the shared ambitions for every Londoner, including those from Black, Asian and other ethnic minority communities.

The strategy seeks to embed race equality in what we do and in our approach to deliver the shared ambitions, ensuring we are inclusive and proactive in understanding and meeting the needs of our communities, residents and staff, irrespective of their race.

Additionally, it is about shaping our organisations role as a convener, collaborator, partner and service provider. At the heart of this, the strategy will aim to:

- Establish an inclusive organisation that realises the value of diversity and inclusivity in improving outcomes and delivering shared ambitions.
- Embed race equality in the way London Councils operates comprised of a consistent, proactive and deliberate approach.
- Establish an organisation that is eager and open to continually learn about race - through our people, boroughs and Londoners.



Strategic and Influential	• Clear sense of the outcomes Leaders are aiming to achieve over time. • Strong relationship with HMG and others in London and across the UK - a trusted partner.
Bold and Responsive	• Powerfully telling London's story. • Ready to seize opportunities. • Championing Londoners, London and all its boroughs - and London Councils.
Modern and Digital	• Using the tools and approaches that will get the greatest impact from collaboration (and make best use of everyone's time) - whether physical or virtual. • Supporting London's story with data and insight. • Becoming a learning organisation.

Aligning the Strategy with our Organisational Values

In March 2022 we established a core set of organisational values which are centred around who we are as an organisation and ensuring we have the conditions to deliver our best work – these have been developed with and by staff (see outlined opposite). The Corporate Race Equality Strategy and Organisational Values have been developed to ensure they complement the delivery and embedding of each other - that is, embedding the values will help ensure race equality is rooted throughout the organisation and delivering the Strategy will support how we live, breathe and enact the values.

Delivering the Corporate Race Equality Strategy – through our behaviours and outcomes - will support our values in a range of ways. This includes but is not limited to:

- **Championing and Serving London** – the Strategy demonstrates our contribution to address inequalities, specifically those

- centred around racial injustice.
- **Collaborative** - central to the approach outlined in the Strategy to embed race equality is ensuring we work together across the organisation to continue building our understanding about race and establish action, in addition to learning through colleagues across our partnership landscape.
- **Equality to Equitable** – this is at the heart of what we are seeking to achieve through delivering this Strategy, as reflected in the behaviours and outcomes. In relation to race, this is about celebrating our cultural diversity; addressing racial inequalities; being our authentic selves.
- **Open** – this is a core behaviour within the Strategy which, in addition to the outcomes, encompasses our ambition to ensure all staff are confident, have a safe space and are open to talking about race, culture and diversity.

Championing and Serving London

- London Councils represents and champions London’s 32 boroughs and the City of London, serving local communities, businesses and amplifying the voice of Londoners.
- We are a cross-party organisation that works on behalf of all our member authorities regardless of political persuasion.
- We work with partners to deliver sustainable change, address inequalities and make London a fairer place for all.

Equality to Equitable

- We are welcoming, are respectful to, and kind to everyone, celebrating our individual differences, cultures and backgrounds.
- We aspire to improve the lives of all Londoners by actively challenging and addressing inequalities.
- We bring our authentic selves to work and act with integrity to achieve a fair and equitable society.

Collaborative

- We take the time to understand the needs of our stakeholders and work with our colleagues, boroughs, partners and local communities to identify common goals.
- We try new and bold ideas to address challenges, accepting that we may not succeed first time and encourage a test and learn culture.
- We celebrate the beauty of individuality and welcome the contribution of every person, place and partner.

Open

- We are open in our approach and provide a safe environment in which new ideas, opinions and feedback are actively sought and encouraged.
- We will be transparent in our assessment of the challenges London faces and open in the decisions we make in response.
- We face the difficult conversations accepting that there will be different opinions, but by listening to each other and working together we build the trust of our boroughs and partners.

Our race equality journey so far (2020 – 2022)

Our Corporate Race Equality Strategy is central to the organisation’s response to significant events which have amplified the urgency to tackle racial injustice. It is our contribution to the energy London boroughs and communities are demonstrating to drive social change; and it is a reflection of the passion colleagues at London Councils have to shape and establish our organisation’s role in striving for race equality across London.

This strategy is an essential part of the first phase of our race equality journey, which is outlined in the timeline (p8), as it brings our ambitions together and establishes how we will bring our goals to life.

Reflecting on our journey to date, this work started in summer 2020 when colleagues at London Councils shared a clear appetite to establish how the organisation can be more proactive on race equality. We have since spent time outlining and framing the key steps we must take as an organisation to understand and define our role and responsibility. These key steps were initially and primarily reflected through recommendations put forward by our internal Race Equality task & finish group.

These recommendations laid the grounding for our Race Equality Working Group’s (the next phase of the task & finish group) subsequent activity to help shape our Corporate Strategy - this comprised of the appointment of a Race Equality lead, engagement with all staff at London Councils and a range of initial actions and changes that have contributed to embedding race equality within the organisation (these actions are explored in more detail in section 4).

Taking this work forward

This strategy has several sections which will outline further grounding for this work and our ambitions up to 2025:

- **Making race equality part of our DNA** which will detail our outcomes, behaviours and action plan. This is about demonstrating and articulating how we will ensure race equality is embedded within all we do as an organisation.
- **Making it stick.** This strategy seeks to establish a continuous plan to embed race equality at London Councils, this section will share how we will resource our plan, evaluate and monitor progress and adapt and update as our race equality journey continues.

- **Our evidence base** which contextualises our case for change and helps build a greater understanding of our organisations. This will outline the perspectives and priorities for our staff in shaping London Councils behaviours and ambitions on race equality.

“This strategy is an essential part of the first phase of our race equality journey”



RACE EQUALITY JOURNEY 2020-2022

September 2020

First all-staff event on race equality, asking colleagues to reflect on recent significant events (George Floyd murder, Black Lives Matter and Covid-19) and share thoughts about role and expectation of London Councils

October 2020 - March 2021

Internal Race Equality Task & Finish Group established and commissioned to produce recommendations to the Corporate Management Team (CMT) on embedding race equality within the organisation

Short term recommendations agreed by CMT

July - September 2021

All staff engagement focused on understanding perspectives and priorities on race equality:

- First annual Race & Inclusivity Survey
- Departmental workshops
- Focus group with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff

October 2021

Celebrating Black History Month, including blog posts and videos from staff

January 2022

Lunch & Learn: Racism in Football, with Andy Rollock

May 2022

London Councils' Corporate Race Equality Strategy launched

October 2020

London Councils' statement on race equality agreed by Leaders'

June 2020

New Race Equality Lead role create (Tom Pickup begins in role)

August 2020

New internal Race Equality Group Established (Chief Executive Ali Griffin agreed as sponsor)

July 2020

Expanded set of mandatory training for staff on equalities

November 2021

Lunch & Learn: Islam 101 with Amin Aboushagor

February 2022

Celebrating Race Equality Week, including blog posts and videos from staff

November 2021 - January 2022

Training pilot with Krystal Alliance 'Let's talk about race' initiated

MAKING RACE EQUALITY PART OF OUR DNA

Our behaviours on race equality

To guide all we do on race equality, as an organisation we commit to the following behaviours. At London Councils we believe each and every one of us should demonstrate leadership on race equality and feel equipped to be an advocate on race. That is why we have established these behaviours to indicate what we expect of each other – this is grounded in our view that the culture of any organisation is shaped by the worst behaviours we are willing to tolerate. These behaviours have been developed to reflect the expectations we set for ourselves – through the honest conversations we held in summer 2021 – and they have been shaped to align with the organisation's broader ambitions to deliver the Shared Ambitions and support our Values.

Our behaviours on race equality describe how we interact, as individuals and collectively, with each other, our partners and stakeholders. These behaviours demonstrate how we will be continually proactive on race.

Being open

Having the confidence and freedom to talk, discuss and share about all issues related to race

Encouraging and welcoming challenge on all issues related to race

Proactive curiosity

Empowering and supporting ourselves to learn and develop our understanding about race

Embracing the perspective that greater knowledge and awareness about race benefits the organisation

Demonstrating respect & understanding

Understanding and celebrating the diverse backgrounds and cultures across the organisation and London

Being confident when talking about and reporting issues on race, doing so with support and dignity

Being fair

Ensuring everyone feels valued and an equal part of the organisation

Applying policies in an equitable and transparent manner

Focusing on action

Being deliberate and actively encouraging to make positive change on all issues related to race

Striving to achieve positive impact in the organisation and our partnerships

Our ambitions and outcomes on race equality - Achieving our vision of becoming an anti-racist organisation, that is reflective of London's vibrancy and communities at all levels

Our outcomes reflect the appetite and drive of colleagues within London Councils, as demonstrated during the staff engagement, and our general determination as an organisation to being a leader on race equality. The behaviours outlined above are central to our approach, as individuals and as an organisation, to achieve these outcomes. We will achieve this by building on the work and recommendations from the initial race equality task & finish group and using the CIPD principles on developing an anti-racist organisation, which will also be factored into our continued improvement, monitoring and evaluation.

Every member of staff considers themselves a leader and champion of race equality - in their work, interacting with customers and in our partnerships.

We will achieve this by:

- Having a robust learning and development offer on race equality comprised of mandatory and optional opportunities for staff to better understand and embed race equality in all they do.
- Senior managers clearly and authentically demonstrate their commitment to race equality and use their roles to help this permeate through the organisation.

Staff from Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic backgrounds feel an active part of the organisation and have fair access to development opportunities.

We will achieve this by:

- Establishing Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic staff development offer that focuses on empowerment, resilience and supporting colleagues to progress. Within this, senior managers build an understanding of the challenges and barriers Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff may encounter, in addition to their role in supporting their development.

We are proactive in celebrating the diversity, racial or otherwise, of our staff and of London.

We will achieve this by:

- Having consistent and creative communication and celebration that is centred on people's voice and their participation. This is also factors in intersectionality and celebrating all forms of diversity.

Our behaviours on race equality are central to all we do - in our work, how we engage with each other and in our partnerships.

We will achieve this by:

- Embedding our behaviour and ambitions for race equality within our appraisals process, objectives and personal development planning.
- Ensuring all members of staff are confident and are supported by senior managers to be ambassadors for race equality, reflected by modelling our behaviours and challenging those who do not align with our approach and expectations.
- Having a clear process available for reporting complaints or grievances that supports all members of staff and instils them with the confidence to speak up.
- Ensuring our policies and procedures are robust and reflect our ambitions, outcomes and behaviours on race equality.

Collecting and sharing data to celebrate and challenge our activity on race equality.

We will achieve this by:

- Advocating Share Not Declare - encourage staff to share their information and being transparent around how and why it is used and captured.
- Being transparent and sharing workforce data with staff as openly and clearly as possible.
- Having continuous and meaningful engagement with staff to capture perspectives and voices e.g., consistent and ad hoc surveying and workshops.
- Having policies and procedures that reflect our ambitions and action on race equality.

Having a robust, culturally competent & fair recruitment processes & practices.

We will achieve this by:

- Having robust recruitment training that is completed by all staff involved in recruitment
- Removing bias, both conscious and unconscious, as far as possible, from all stages of our recruitment process.
- Having recruitment panels that are diverse to incorporate a breadth of perspectives, expertise and experience. By this we mean panels comprise of members that are from different backgrounds and departments, whenever possible.
- Having a transparent and consistent approach to recruitment decisions, this includes clear justification when decisions are made beyond our normal recruitment processes.
- Having an induction process that outlines and amplifies our ambitions on race equality to new starters.
- Developing inclusive job promotion practices to improve how we advertise to diverse audiences and reach wider applicant pools.

Striving for continuous improvement that is informed by data and insights.

We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring robust and consistent monitoring of recruitment data, trends and candidate feedback to continually shape and improve our recruitment process.
- Having a consistent approach to exit interviews or surveys that ensures they are completed by every leaving member of staff and that their feedback is acted upon.
- Proactively publishing data linked to race equality within the organisation, where possible, in a way that is easy to understand and digest.
- Continually seeking and reviewing perspectives and practice elsewhere to inform our improvement.

MAKING IT STICK

Evaluation and monitoring

In monitoring and evaluating the strategy, we want to focus on modelling here the same values and behaviours that underpin the strategy as a whole, London Councils' Shared Ambitions to deliver for Londoners and our organisational Values. We therefore want to avoid taking a by numbers box ticking approach but thinking instead of what we want to do with any data gathered and how it will inform ongoing decision making in the organisation. Many of the outcomes are about central attitudes and behaviours in the organisation and therefore measured in a qualitative way.

We are also very aware of the limitations of our quantitative data with a footprint of just 130 staff. However, it is important to track progress and the effectiveness of actions/strategies against the baseline that we do have, and also to play in the importance of intersectionality and capture the multiplicity of experiences amongst employees with overlapping identities¹.

Monitoring of key data on recruitment, retention, progression, performance and reward should form part of the baseline.

High-quality workforce data of all kinds also depends on staff feeling safe enough to share or disclose information about their experiences and characteristics. To create and promote an open and safe environment, London Councils should foster and maintain open communication at all levels explaining why it wants to collect and analyse workforce data. This will help improve confidence in reporting sensitive information and will help foster an open and inclusive workplace culture, which of course are our key overarching goals.

Therefore, at the centre of our monitoring is an annual repeat of the Race and Inclusivity Survey. While there will be additional fields included, many of the same questions on how staff feel about race equality within different aspects of the organisation will be repeated to create a rough story on our ongoing process. Central to this is the four positive 'statements', views on development opportunities, diversity training and whether staff feel they can be themselves in work. The analysis of this will feed directly into a brief yearly statement and action plan presented to CMT and

the Race Equality Working Group (or successor) – although we would want to stress that this must not be the only time the issue is considered over the year, merely an overview of staff views and an opportunity (and dedicated time set aside) to take stock. Engagement with staff forums would also provide opportunities to undertake "deep dives" into emerging issues or areas of interest.

The analysis of the survey should start to assess the achievement of the stated outcomes:

“At the centre of our monitoring is an annual repeat of the Race and Inclusivity Survey”



¹ 1. CIPD: Developing an anti-racism strategy

Outcome	How we will achieve this	How we will monitor this
Every member of staff considers themselves a leader and champion of race equality - in their work, interacting with customers and in our partnerships.	• Having a robust learning and development offer on race equality comprised of mandatory and optional opportunities for staff to better understand and embed race equality in all they do. • Senior managers clearly and authentically demonstrate their commitment to race equality and use their roles to help this permeate through the organisation	• Training attendance and qualitative feedback about training • Race & Inclusivity staff survey feedback on experience of management and more broadly around the statement 'London Councils is supportive of all its staff' • Workforce ethnicity data, including percentage of chief officers from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups • Data on retention, progression, performance and reward This will be used to performance manage any training contract in place / reshape training offer.
Staff from Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic backgrounds feel an active part of the organisation and have fair access to development opportunities.	• Establishing Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic staff development offer that focuses on empowerment, resilience and supporting colleagues to progress. Within this, senior managers build an understanding of the challenges and barriers Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff may encounter, in addition to their role in supporting their development.	• Race & Inclusivity staff survey feedback. • Workforce ethnicity data, including percentage of chief officers from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups. • Data on retention, progression, performance and reward. This will be used to plan our overall development approach.
We are proactive in celebrating the diversity, racial or otherwise, of our staff and of London	• Having consistent and creative communication and celebration that is centred on people's voice and their participation. This is also factors in intersectionality and celebrating all forms of diversity.	Review of internal communications, including feedback and learning around them. Examples of how we intend to implement this: - Contributions from staff to internal communications, characterised by colleagues being open and confident in sharing their background and culture - Consistent celebration of significant cultural events which are led by or have contributions from staff - Establishing creative ways to involve staff in sharing, understanding and celebrating culture and diversity within the organisation and across London.

Outcome	How we will achieve this	How we will monitor this
Our behaviours on race equality are central to all we do - in our work, how we engage with each other and in our partnerships.	• Embedding our behaviour and ambitions for race equality within our appraisals process, objectives and personal development planning.. • Ensuring all members of staff are confident and are supported by senior managers to be ambassadors for race equality, reflected by modelling our behaviours and challenging those who do not align with our approach and expectations. • Having a clear process available for reporting complaints or grievances that supports all members of staff and instils them with the confidence to speak up. • Ensuring our policies and procedures are robust and reflect our ambitions, outcomes and behaviours on race equality.	• An initial focused deep dive to identify policies that need updating. • Race & Inclusivity staff survey feedback. • Feedback – formal and informal – from the whole organisation. This will be used to inform further policies in need of review – and how we are progressing on the overall culture of the organisation – as policies must be lived not placed in a box or website without continual review.
Collecting and sharing data to celebrate and challenge our activity on race equality.	• Advocating Share Not Declare - encourage staff to share their information and being transparent around how and why it is used and captured. • Having policies and procedures that reflect our ambitions and action on race equality. • Being transparent and sharing workforce data with staff as openly and clearly as possible. • Having continuous and meaningful engagement with staff to capture perspectives and voices e.g., consistent and ad hoc surveying and workshops.	• Race & Inclusivity staff survey feedback, including monitoring change around perspectives on the statements: • London Councils is supportive of all staff • London Councils is a diverse organisation • London Councils has an inclusive work culture • Race Equality is well embedded with London Councils • Percentage of staff sharing their ethnicity data. This will be used to assess whether the work undertaken is having an impact and review future plans.

Outcome	How we will achieve this	How we will monitor this
Having a robust, culturally competent and fair recruitment processes and practices	• Having robust recruitment training that is completed by all staff involved in recruitment. • Removing bias, conscious and unconscious, as far as possible from all stages of our recruitment process. • Having recruitment panels that are diverse to incorporate a breadth of perspectives, expertise and experience. By this we mean panels comprise of members there are from different backgrounds and departments, whenever possible. • Having a transparent and consistent approach to recruitment decisions, this includes clear justification when decisions are made beyond our normal recruitment processes. • Having an induction process that outlines and amplifies our ambitions on race equality to new starters. • Developing inclusive job promotion practices to improve how we advertise to diverse audiences and reach wider applicant pools	• Analysis of data already collected on ethnicity of applicants at the following stages (and broken down by level of seniority): • Application • Interview long list • Successful applicants • Information from exit interviews This will be used to focus our interventions – do we need to advertise and promote opportunities better? Or improve our processes following application? Or indeed – both. We already collect this data but do not use it to push for inclusion across the organisation.
Striving for continuous improvement that is informed by data and insights.	• Ensuring robust and consistent monitoring of recruitment data, trends and candidate feedback to continually shape and improve our recruitment process. • Having a consistent approach to exit interviews or surveys that ensures they are completed by every leaving member of staff and that their feedback is acted upon. • Proactively publishing data linked to race equality within the organisation, where possible, in a way that is easy to understand and digest. • Continually seeking and reviewing perspectives and practice elsewhere to inform our improvement.	Regular (annual) consideration of data collected and analysis of what it is used for. This will inform future data collection and publication

Next steps and Resourcing

Our ambitions on race equality cannot be delivered without meaningful resource. To support and ensure delivery by 2025 the organisation commits to:

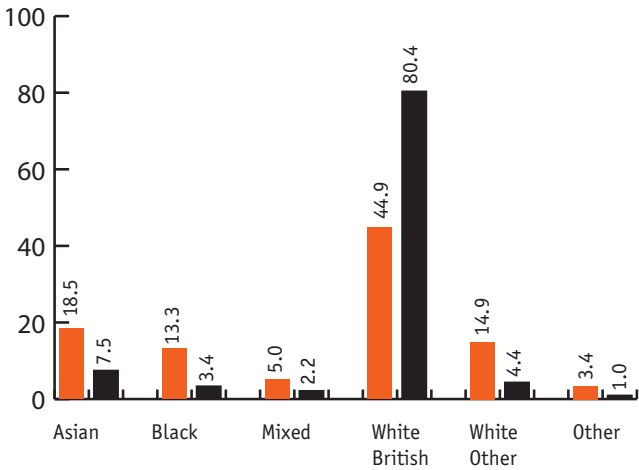
- **A Race Equality Working Group and Race Equality Staff Network**
These groups will be complementary in supporting, evaluating and monitoring the delivery of our ambitions. The Race Equality Working Group, with the organisation's Corporate Management Team, will oversee and monitor delivery and the Race Equality Staff Network will support in the delivery. Both the working group and staff network will be populated by staff who are given the freedom to dedicate time, alongside their day-to-day work, to be active members of these groups.
- **A dedicated Race Equality Working Group Chair**
The Race Equality Working Group will have a dedicated Chair who will drive activities and action.
- **Learning & development on race equality**
The organisation has committed to resourcing training, learning and development on race equality as part of the emerging organisation wide learning and development framework. The Race Equality Working Group will finalise race equality elements of this framework, building on the needs articulated by staff and best practice demonstrated by our partners and elsewhere.



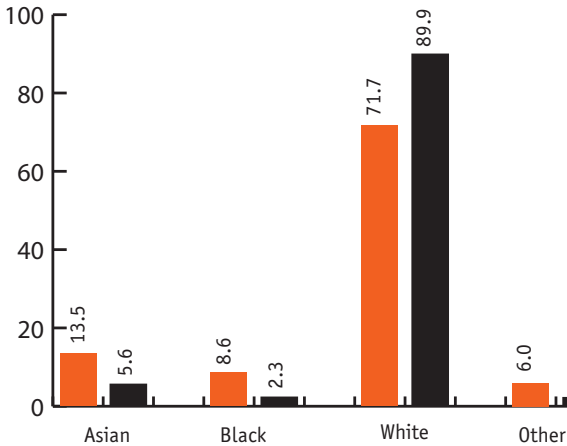
EVIDENCE BASE

As outlined in our Shared Ambitions, representing and acting as a voice for London is central to what we do as an organisation. That is why it is essential to understand and benchmark against London’s diversity when determining our role on race equality and in ensuring our organisation is positioned, as best as possible, to represent London and Londoners. The tables opposite outline London’s diversity drawing upon Census 2011 and ONS data , this data is also referenced below in presenting the London Councils workforce picture.

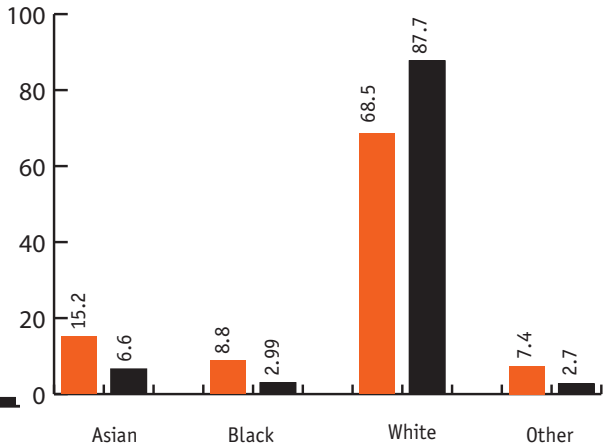
London’s ethnic diversity
(Census 2011, % breakdown)



London’s working population by ethnicity
(ONS 2011, % breakdown)



London’s working population by ethnicity
(ONS 2018, % breakdown)



London England & Wales



Understanding London Councils: The workforce picture

As an organisation, we believe data and evidence must be at the heart of action to address barriers that prevent racial equality. To understand those barriers and challenges and drive effective action within London Councils it is essential to capture, monitor and analyse workforce data. London Councils already collects and monitors a range of workforce data categories, some of which have been recently expanded following recommendations from the Race Equality task & finish group.

Despite being exempt from statutory requirements to publish information as set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty (as the organisation as less than 150 employees), London Councils publishes an annual workforce audit report. The 2020/21 workforce audit report, [which can be found here](#), provides the following detail about the workforce by ethnicity:

31% of our staff are from Black Asian or other ethnic minority backgrounds



12% of our organisation have not declared their ethnicity



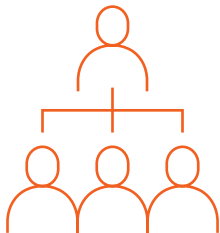
74% of our staff believe the organisation is committed to diversity and inclusion



Half of our Black colleagues have experienced or witnessed racial discrimination at London Councils



23% of our senior managers are from Black, Asian or other minority backgrounds



Ethnicity pay gap. On average White staff are paid £1.84 per hour more than Black Asian and Minority Ethnic staff



43% of colleagues do not know how to report racial discrimination and believe there are barriers to speaking out

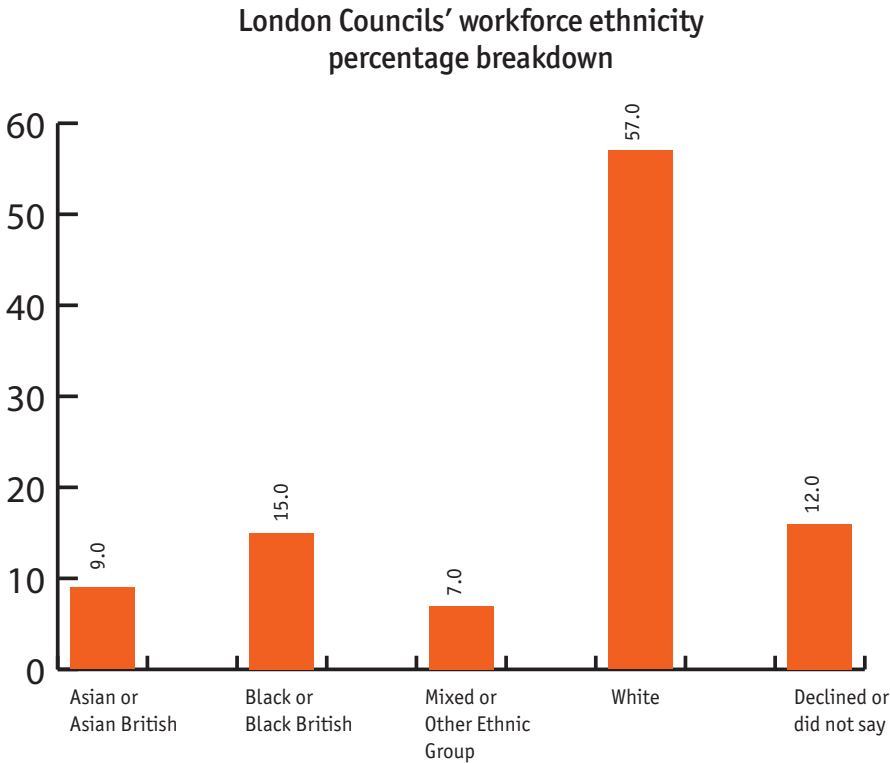


Overall, colleagues are negative about diversity training at London Councils



The workforce composition in terms of Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff has been steadily increasing over recent years. In 2016 it was 25% and it has been increasing year on year. In 2020/21, it has increased to 31% with 40 employees from ethnic minority backgrounds (this is slightly lower than the general London population which is around 40%, drawing from census 2011 figures).

There are 16 staff (12%) who have declined or not stated their ethnicity. While this is an improvement from the previous year (19 staff declined or not stated), the organisation should continue to make a concerted effort to encourage all staff to share their ethnicity whilst being transparent and clear around the importance of this data and how it will be used.



Ethnic Group	Headcount	Percentage
Asian or Asian British	12	9%
Black or Black British	19	15%
Mixed & Other Ethnic groups	9	7%
White	75	57%
Declined or Not Stated	16	12%
Grand Total	131	100%

Ethnic composition of the workforce by grade

London is the most ethnically diverse region of the United Kingdom. When comparing our workforce to the London population (using 2011 census figures) we find the following:

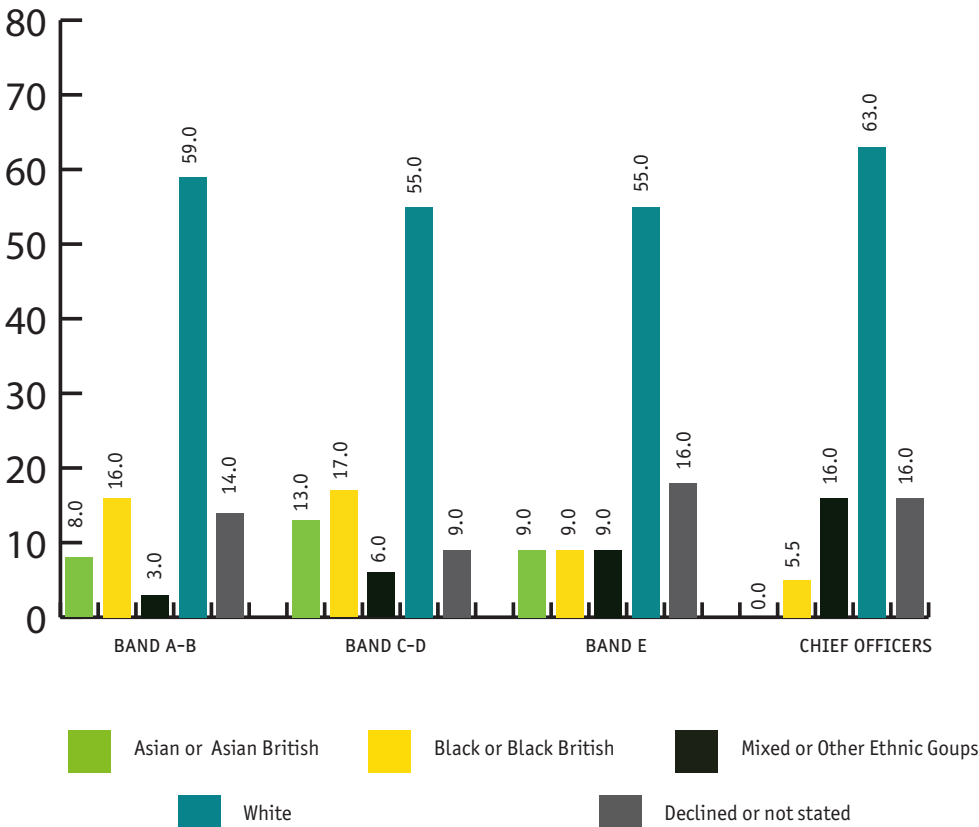
- Asian and Asian British staff are under-represented across all grades.
- While the proportion Black and Black British staff is higher than the general London population, they are mostly employed in Bands A to D.
- Mixed and other ethnic minority groups are under-represented in Bands A to D.
- Black and Asian staff are under-represented in the Chief Officer and Band E grades.

The 2020/21 workforce audit report also compares trends from 2018 and 2021 – the organisation has seen:

- An increase in female Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff of 4 staff (an increase of 20%), with 3 Asian and one mixed or other ethnic minority women.
- An increase of 5 male staff (50% increase), with 2 Asian, 2 Black and one mixed or other ethnic minority men.

Ethnic Group	Band A to B	Band C to D	Band E	Chief Officers	Grand total
Asian or Asian British	3	8	1	0	12
Black or Black British	6	11	1	1	19
Mixed & Other Ethnic Groups	1	4	1	3	9
White	22	35	6	12	75
Declined or Not Stated	5	6	2	3	16
Grand Total	37	64	11	19	131

Percentage breakdown of staff ethnicity by grade

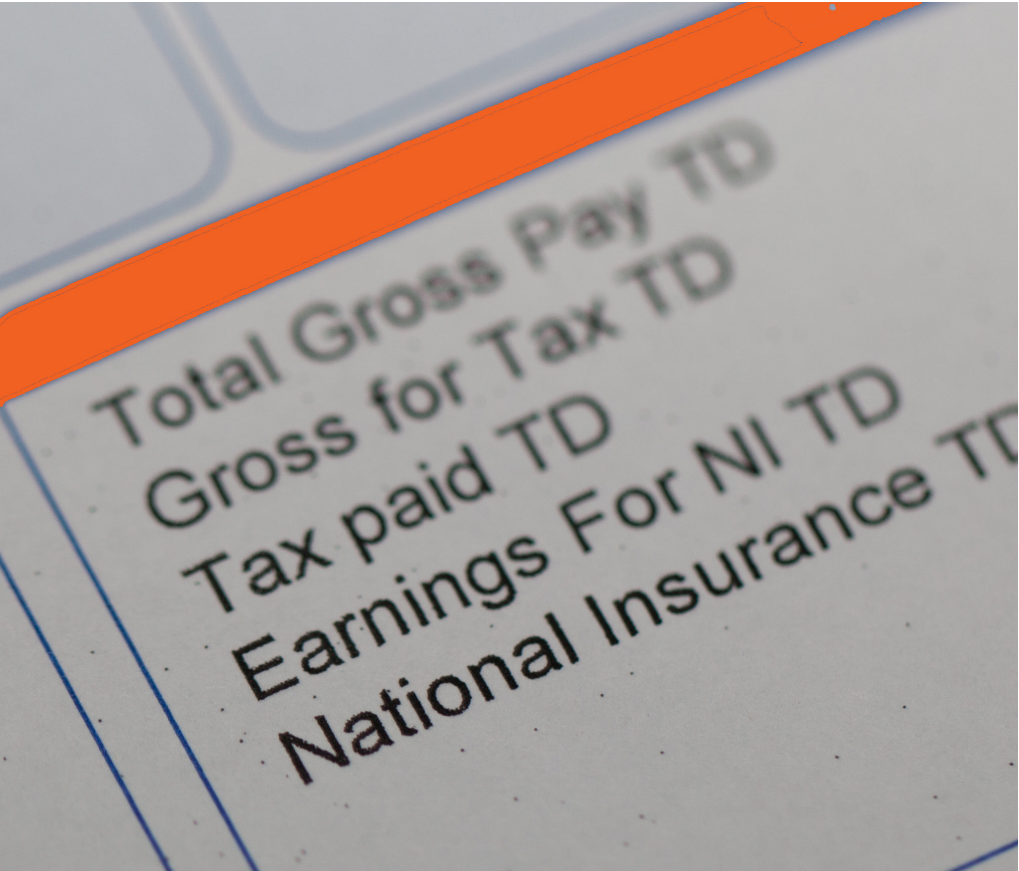


Ethnicity pay gap

The Mean Average Ethnic Pay Gap between white and ethnic minority staff is 6.6%, which indicates average pay for White staff is more.

The median is the middle value in a range of numbers. In London Councils, the Median Ethnic Pay Gap is -0.5%, which indicates ethnic minority staff are paid marginally more at the mid pay point. The table above shows the hourly pay rates for the Mean Average and Median for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and White staff.

	BAME	White	Difference (£)
Mean Hourly Rate	£25.93	£27.77	£1.84
Median Hourly Rate	£23.33	£23.21	-£0.12



Capturing staff voice - engagement and qualitative findings

Since 2020 the organisation has undertaken a series of engagement to better understand and capture staff voice, particularly in relation to race equality. This engagement was centred around empowerment – this means providing the opportunity and platform for colleagues to articulate their perspectives, share their experiences and have a safe space to do this. What we heard from staff is at the core of this strategy and what we aim to achieve, that is why it is important to see and understand how the engagement has inform our ambitions.

Our engagement process has comprised of:

- 1.All Staff Event – September 2020
- 2.Race & Inclusivity survey – August 2021
- 3.All Staff Race Equality workshops – August and September 2021
- 4.Focus group with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff – October 2021

All Staff Event September 2020

London Councils held its first all staff event dedicated to race equality, providing a platform for colleagues to share their thoughts and reactions to the murder of George Floyd and subsequent global action. The meeting reflected on these events and discussed challenges, action and changes needed within the organisation, this included:

- Lack of visible leadership on race equality, including a lack of ethnic minority representation on senior management team and no proactive response from the leadership team to global demonstrations and issues raised on race equality
- Instances of discrimination within organisation on grounds of race/gender/age/sexual orientation, including inconsistent application of corporate policies leading to unfair treatment of staff and the need for an external review of London Councils' equalities practices
- Perception that London Councils is not representative of the London population
- Lack of mandatory equalities training and improvements required to training and development offer to staff

- Improvements required to recruitment practices to attract more applicants from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups
- Refresh equal opportunities and other relevant corporate policies
- The provision of safe spaces to discuss matters on racial equality
- Lack of openness and transparency
- Inactive Corporate Equalities group

The call for action from staff during the event resulted in the creation of a race equality task and finish group which was tasked with undertaking a rapid piece of work to develop practical recommendations to promote racial equality.

Race & Inclusivity survey findings

The race equality task and finish group put forward a recommendation for London Councils to conduct a survey of staff to understand their work experience at the organisation, with an emphasis on race equality.

The survey was the first of its kind at London Councils, running between 12 July and 3 August 2021, and will be repeated annually. It received 84 responses out of 133 members of staff - 63% of the organisation.

Key findings included (extended summary of findings can be seen in the annex):

- Overall, responses across the categories are positive excluding those in relation to London Councils training that promotes diversity and there are somewhat mixed perspectives around recruitment experience and workforce diversity. However, when different personal characteristics are considered separately, responses from Black and Asian respondents tended to be more negative.
- Around 40% of respondents do not know how to report racial discrimination and believe there are barriers to speaking out

about racial discrimination. Additionally, around half of Black respondents say they have experienced or witnessed racial discrimination at London Councils in the last 2 years.

- There are mixed perceptions around recruitment across respondents. Overall, there were negative responses to London Councils approach to recruiting people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds and around how representative the London Councils workforce is of the capital’s population.
- Although there were overwhelmingly negative responses from Black and Asian respondents around whether employees are encouraged to apply to high positions, the majority of respondents, including Black and Asian respondents do not believe their progression at London Councils has been negatively affected by their race.
- Overall respondents were negative around diversity training at London Councils: 42% positive v 58% negative.

All Staff Race Equality Workshop findings

To build on the Race & Inclusivity survey, a series of workshops were organised in August and September 2021 for colleagues to explore race equality priorities for the organisation in more depth, including perspectives on solutions to existing challenges. Five workshops took place - one for each directorate, and one for anyone who was unable to attend a previous session. Overall, 91 colleagues attended a workshop, accounting for 68% of the organisation.

The insights from the workshop told us that staff have a series of priorities and expectations for the organisation. These have been central to shaping the outcomes and behaviours. The following include some of the key findings during the engagement (detailed findings can be found in the annex).

Colleagues were asked to consider a series of statements about race equality at London Councils and rate whether they felt these were accurate:

Statement	Average score
London Councils is supportive of all staff	6.68
London Councils is a diverse organisation	6.25
London Councils has an inclusive work culture	5.95
Race Equality is well embedded with London Councils	4.93

Attendees were more likely to agree that London Councils is supportive of all staff, but least likely to believe that race equality is well embedded within the organisation, or that London Councils has an inclusive work culture.

Colleagues were asked to consider what would make them feel valued and included in the organisation, several important themes emerged:

- Openness
- Fairness
- Learning
- Respect and understanding

Colleagues were then asked how London Councils can make all staff feel valued and included, discussions centred on the following points:

- Clear statement and commitments
- Focus on progression and development
- Clear policies processes

Staff considered the role of leadership in building an inclusive organisation. From discussions across each of the workshops, several characteristics of an inclusive leader came to the fore:

- Being visible, characterised by openness and transparency
- Cultural awareness and empathy
- Self-awareness and authenticity
- Proactivity... being deliberate

It was also clear that showing leadership on race equality is something all staff can get involved in and benefit from, not just those with managerial or leadership roles. There were discussions on how best to enable all staff to embed race equality in their work, for example by developing a policy framework and reviewing London Councils' own policies, procedures and processes.

Colleagues shared reflections on what makes them feel they are in a diverse organisation. In order to improve diversity within London Councils, staff said that the following actions should be taken:

- Review our recruitment and induction process to adopt 'blind' processes that focuses on skills and removes unconscious bias. This also includes robust recruitment training.
- Improving outreach and proactively appealing to different communities.
- Expanding the organisation work experience offer to establish links with different communities
- Having routes to senior levels for everyone - consisting of a clear, defined and transparent development and progression offer, including a tailored offer for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff.

The diagram opposite combines the key feedback, findings and outputs for the organisation. The outputs are underpinned by the principle of transparency, which colleagues felt would build trust in the organisation and show how we are making progress towards greater inclusivity.

Inclusive recruitment process & practice

Develop a fair process that proactively appeals to a diverse range of communities

Robust training offer

Mandatory and frequent training offer that actively features within staff development

Visible Brand & Leadership

Sharing, communicating and celebrating our workforce diversity
Sharing and communicating our race equality journey
Dedicating more time to explore and discuss issues of race and equalities
Management driving & championing on race equality

Transparency

Embedding race equality in all we do

Reviewing our policies, practices and processes to understand how race equality can be embedded

Clear development & progression routes

Providing more opportunities for progression through development plans, both across the organisation and to improve diversity at senior levels

Additional mentions

Data monitoring: Using data to support and monitor change and impact

Public sector duty: Ensuring we understand and deliver on our duties

Black Asian and Minority Ethnic Staff Focus Group

In October 2021 a focus group with Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff was held to provide a safe space for colleagues to share they experiences, concerns and aspirations both as individuals and for the organisation. The key findings included:

- Amplifying the importance of culturally competent line managers who are characterised by:
- - Having an understanding of barriers and challenges around development and progression for people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds
 - Build their ability and confidence to be proactive around their development and identifying opportunities that are tailored for people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities
 - Having a fair and equal approach to appraisals

- Having greater transparency and discretion around beneficiaries of pay increase, progression and senior appointments
- Equality of opportunity, including awareness of development opportunities and programmes e.g. mentoring
- Identifying and referring to tailored schemes e.g. BALI which helps to empower, develop leadership skills and understanding peoples value in being from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic background
- Building a healthy working environment:
 1. Contractors/providers – scrutinising the partners we work with and having more emphasis on diversity and inclusivity within our procurement
 2. Ensuring equality if treatment and support for all staff
 3. Safe spaces and continued momentum - Establishing a forum/network to continue the conversation about race and discuss issues, challenges, achievements

4. Allyship - Having training and mechanisms to support managers and staff across the organisation to be advocates

Conclusion

The engagement processes provided an opportunity to gain some insight into the lived experiences of all staff within the organisation, including Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff. There were a number of recurring themes that arose in the processes such as the importance of visible leadership on race equality, transparent and open practices, mandatory equalities training, an improved training and development offer and a perception of the lack of diversity in senior management grades. The processes have provided a rich source of qualitative data to reflect on and start identifying ways of promoting and embedding racial equality in all we do.

GLOSSARY

The following definitions are key terms referenced in this report. It should be noted that these definitions will only help provide limited understanding around what they mean and their importance, additionally, some of these terms do not a set definition but rather a general perspective. Greater understanding around these terms should be developed through training and learning.

Anti-racist organisation:

- Addressing the root causes of racial inequality; maintaining a zero-tolerance approach to workplace discrimination and having committed planned action.¹
- Complementing an understanding of racial injustice with the confidence and proactivity to challenge it.

Institutional racism:

“The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance,

thoughtlessness and racial stereotyping.”²

Cultural competence:

The ability to communicate and interact effectively with people regardless of their background. This applies both at an individual level but also across organisational process, systems and cultures.

Share not declare:

The perspective of ‘sharing’ information (often personal (e.g. personal characteristics) or otherwise) rather than feeling an obligation to ‘declare’ information. This is centred around encouraging staff, service users etc. to share their information in the interest of building a greater understanding of issues, challenges and trends. Central to this is being entirely transparent around how and why this information is used and captured which will help contribute to building trust and confidence.

Intersectionality:

- Intersectionality is the acknowledgement that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination and oppression and we must consider everything and anything that can marginalise people – gender, race, class, sexual orientation, physical ability, etc.
- “Intersectionality is a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it interlocks and intersects. It’s not simply that there’s a race problem here, a gender problem here, and a class or LGBTQ problem there.”

1. CIPD: Developing an anti-racism strategy

2. The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry

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