



Cambridge City Council Equalities Panel

Date: Monday, 3 February 2025

Time: 4.00 pm

Venue: via Microsoft Teams

Contact: Helen.Crowther@cambridge.gov.uk tel:01223 457000

Agenda

- 1 Welcome, Introductions and Apologies
- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising (Pages 3 - 18)
- 4 Public Questions
- 5 Embedding health inequalities in paying due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Pages 19 - 22)
Suzanne Goff (Health Prevention Programme Officer)
- 6 Development of Cambridge City Council's equalities objectives for 2025/26 (Pages 23 - 24)
Helen Crowther (Equality & Anti-Poverty Officer)
- 7 Any Other Business
- 8 Date of Next Meeting
3 July 2025

Chair: Sam Scharf and Robert Pollock

Elected Members: Councillors Bird, Flaubert, Porrer, Smart and Wade

Public Members: Raheela Rehman

Staff Members: Naomi Armstrong, Ariadne Henry and Alistair Wilson

Information for the public

Please note that the meeting will be held between 4pm and 6pm virtually on Microsoft Teams.

Members of the Panel can be sent a link in advance via email to join the meeting on Teams.

If you are not a member of the Panel but are interested in joining to observe the meeting, please contact Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer, on 01223 457046 or Helen.Crowther@cambridge.gov.uk

EQUALITIES PANEL2 July 2024
4.00 - 6.00 pm**Present:****Chair:** Sam Scharf, Director of Communities**Councillor members:** Cllr Bird; Cllr Flaubert; Cllr Porrer; Cllr Smart; Cllr Wade**Public member:** Raheela Rehman**Officer member:** Naomi Armstrong**Other officers in attendance:** Helen Crowther; Lynsey Fulcher; Victoria Jameson**Other councillors in attendance:** Cllr Bennett**FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL****24/9/EP Welcome, Introductions and Apologies**

Apologies were received from public member Orsola Spivak, and staff members Alistair Wilson, Ariadne Henry, and Lesley-Ann George.

24/10/EP Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were declared.

24/11/EP Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2024 were noted to be an accurate record of the conversation subject to noting related to content page 4 where Cllr Porrer “mentioned that the council could work more closely with Anglia Ruskin University around shaping skills and learning opportunities” that Cllr Porrer works for the university.

Helen Crowther mentioned that the Community Wealth Building Strategy (an item at the previous meeting) was approved at committee. Sam Scharf shared it might be helpful for the Community Wealth Building Strategy and work around promoting community power to be brought forward as Panel items at the next meeting.

Sam Scharf drew attention to Vicky Haywood’s written update in the background papers to this meeting on the Youth Strategy (an item at the previous meeting). Cllr Wade said that the work described in the update was a great start and that it is good to see its capturing seldom heard voices. Sam

Scarf said that the Youth Strategy could come back to the Panel once the Youth Assembly has been held. Cllr Bennett raised that Cllr Tong is a Green Party Youth Lead and very active in this role.

24/12/EP Public Questions

There were no public questions.

24/13/EP Disabled People's Manifesto and Cambridge City Council's support for disabled people

Helen Crother (Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer) undertook a presentation introducing the Disabled People's Manifesto and Cambridge City Council's support for disabled residents under the four themes of the manifesto. She explained:

- At Full Council on 23 May a motion on Disability Rights included the commitment to refer the Disabled People's Manifesto to the Council's Equalities Panel for scrutiny and debate and reporting back to the Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee on their discussions.
- The Deaf and disabled people's organisations that developed the manifesto did so to influence the next government, so some of the recommendations would be for national government to implement, rather than local authorities.
- The four themes of the manifesto:
 - Representation & Voice: Removal of barriers to participate in political and public life.
 - Rights: Full rights set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
 - Independence: The right to live independently with choice and control over the support given.
 - Inclusion: Plans for every aspect of life to address specific needs of disabled people from the outset.
- Some key issues experienced by disabled people which have shaped the manifesto:
 - A higher risk of poverty
 - Barriers from voting
 - Lack of funding for voluntary and community sector organisations supporting them
 - Hate crime
 - Issues relating to benefits
 - Extra costs associated with living with their disability
 - Poor accessibility of public spaces and workplaces

- Higher unemployment & economic inactivity
- Educational disparity
- Examples of work Cambridge City Council undertakes to support residents relating to the four themes of the manifesto:
 - In relation to representation and voice, the council uses expert advice on reasonable adjustments that can be made at polling stations from its Access Officer. It also provides community grants to organisations supporting disabled people.
 - In relation to the theme of rights, the council undertakes Equality Impact Assessments to consider the impact of its decisions on groups protected by the Equality Act (like disabled people) and around income and poverty. It works with the Community Safety Partnership to help tackle hate crime experienced by disabled people and other groups.
 - In relation to the theme independence, Cambridge City Council has funded an outreach advice service from Disability Huntingdonshire within Cambridge City providing expert on benefit entitlement. It also provides Discretionary Housing Payments to people on Housing Benefit struggling financially that especially benefits disabled people due to their extra living costs. Moreover, the council provides Disabled Facilities Grants of up to £30,000 for adaptations for disabled people living in private rented housing or who own their homes, and has an annual budget of £800,000 to make adaptations for disabled people in the council's own housing stock.
 - In relation to the theme of inclusion, the council is completing Changing Places toilets at Cherry Hinton Hall and Drummer Street. It also provides the Taxicard service and supports Dial-a-Ride to support disabled people get into the city and the Shopmobility service enabling people to hire wheelchairs/mobility scooters once in the city. Also, The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service employs an Access Officer to give advice on disability access at all stages of any planning application. The Access Officer also gives advice on the Equality Act 2010 rights of and duties to disabled people relating to access (and more broadly) to the council itself, local businesses, and residents/visitors.

Panel members were asked to feedback on what more the council might do to support disabled people relating to the four themes of the manifesto.

- A panel member suggested getting The Department for Work and Pensions to present at a Panel meeting to share what they do to support for disabled people given issues relating to benefits.

- Cllr Bird raised awareness of an issue that taxis sometimes refuse to pick up disabled people with wheelchairs or mobility scooters. Also, in relation to voting, disabled people are less likely to have passports or driving licences that are now required to be allowed to vote.
- Cllr Bennett asked whether the issue of taxi bookings apps not including details on the sort of wheelchair they are being asked to transport has been resolved. Some wheelchairs fold up and at other end have heavy mobility scooters, and it is helpful for taxi drivers to know what to expect so that the correct type of vehicle picks up disabled passengers.
- Cllr Wade said that the council does not always communicate the positive things it does enough. On the theme of giving disabled people's organisations more voice, which is raised in the Disabled People's Manifesto, she said there is a need to bear in mind that people can be isolated due to their disability and not connected to any organisation. Cllr Wade suggested that the council could find a forum for disabled people to share lived experiences.
- Cllr Bennett shared that she was keen to bring this item to the Panel, having raised the Disability Rights UK 2024 council motion, in part to get information out on the council's offer to disabled people. She asked if councillors could be supported more to learn about this offer, and said that councillors do not have a understanding of the social care model or an understanding of different disabilities.
- Cllr Smart said that the way people become a councillor tends to be through their political party. He suggested that the council could have a greater role in sharing with political parties what is expected of them to increase diverse representation of councillors.
- Cllr Bird asked if we might share more information in Cambridge Matters, a magazine that goes out to all Cambridge residents, on disabled people's organisations available to support people and on initiatives like the Taxicard scheme.
- Cllr Bennett raised awareness of the LGA Disability group open for attendance from staff and councillors from councils, and that been running disability leadership training with funding to do a third session.
- Sam Scharf said that the council might be able to give the Equalities Panel powers to call up equality impact assessments (EqIAs) for their review to make a greater impact on promoting equality, diversity and inclusion across the council's work.
- Cllr Porrer shared concerns about how much scrutiny EqIAs get and whether they are overly positive by not identifying who is negatively impacted.

- A Panel member shared that EqlAs often are about changes being implemented that have a positive impact on residents, as this reflects the council's role in serving or supporting residents. This group could help make sure EqlAs are produced at the right time to make the greatest impact in shaping a strategy, policy, plan or procedure.
- Cllr Bennett said it is hard for disabled people to exert their rights if they are not aware of them, so it is important to get the message out on how the council supports disabled people. She said that councillors can act as intermediaries to get information out to residents too. She suggested that in its communications the council needs to pay attention to people's different adjustments they might need e.g. where people use screen readers.
- Cllr Flaubert asked if it would be helpful to have a single point of contact at the council for discrimination complaints. Cllr Flaubert shared that Citizens Advice had recently advised one of their clients to complain about not feeling listened to due to their disability through her. Sam Scharf said that people should be encouraged to use formal complaint channels where complaints get systematically addressed.
- Naomi Armstrong, in her capacity as Benefits Manager at Cambridge City Council, shared that the council tops up the allowance it gets from national government set aside for Discretionary Housing Payments. Cambridge City Council is flexible in responding to patterns around local need at any given time – for instance the council provided bigger allowances when fuel poverty was highest.
- Cllr Porrer asked about the impact of the migration to Universal Credit on disabled people relating to how it is paid in arrears, and how carers of people with disabilities are supported.
- In response to Cllr Porrer, Naomi Armstrong shared that Universal Credit (UC) is paid monthly and at the end of each month in arrears, and given that there is an assessment period of 3 days people can wait for nearly 5 weeks to get their first payment. As people migrate to UC, Housing Benefit can be paid for an extra two weeks. The Benefits Team is liaising with Cambridgeshire County Council on how people can be assisted as best as possible to access the Household Support Fund. Most people get 3 months' notice to transition to UC. The Department for Work and Pensions estimates that 4% of each cohort fails to apply and the council does not find out who has failed until after the three-month period ends. City Homes visit tenants who have failed to migrate to UC to try to support them in their claim and get it backdated by one month. Cambridge City Council does not have resource to do home visits across the city, but its homelessness provision service and Citizens Advice (whom the council funds) are proactive in offering support.

- Sam Scharf pointed out that for the Disabled Facilities Grants for adaptations for disabled people living in the private sector and with home ownership, the council underspends in the city so some of its allocation goes back to Huntingdonshire. He asked if the council might better raise awareness of Disabled Facilities Grants in this context. Cllr Bennett said there was low awareness of this support amongst councillors and that offering financial help can be a difficult conversation as many disabled people want to be independent. Sam Scharf pointed out that Disabled Facilities Grants are means tested and often a contribution from a householder would be needed but the Home Improvement Agency does not just offer financial support but can call on trusted providers to identify needs (as they work with Occupational Therapists) and to get work done.
- Cllr Porrer said that herself and Cllr Smart raise awareness of Changing Places toilets at planning committees to try to influence developers to provide these.
- Cllr Bird said that a lot of people do not realise they can use their Taxicard on Dial-a-Ride. She asked if we do work identifying taxi drivers who accept jobs for people in wheelchairs, and also if we check how many Taxicard vouchers are handed back and refunded.
- Cllr Smart said he is not keen on council motions being raised for the council to tell itself what to do. He asked whether the Panel should go out to disability groups to ask them what more we might do to support disabled people. Cllr Smart also asked how useful the Disabled People's Manifesto is, as there are a lot of disability rights groups, and if the manifesto is useful to the council itself.
- Cllr Bennett said that the manifesto was published earlier than Disability Rights UK anticipated in time for the general election, and it is in development.
- Cllr Bennett shared that the Local Government Association is developing a knowledge hub sharing case studies of what other councils are doing to support disabled people that might be useful for Cambridge City Council to learn from.

Helen Crowther responded to the Panel members' feedback and questions:

- For Cllr Bennett's question on taxis, Helen said she will follow up on this and find out more
- Helen said that the council needs to more fully explore implications of the Panel calling up EqlAs. She added that EqlAs tend to be produced quite close to a decision being made that makes it hard to bring them to the Panel at a point when this would be timely to have the most impact.
- In response to Cllr Bird's query on if the council checks which taxi drivers do not accept jobs for people in wheelchairs, Helen said that the Taxi

Licensing Team speaks to those individuals not accepting these jobs to remind them of the law and to share consequences for disabled people of them not taking on jobs. The team also looks to see if any legal action can be taken. Helen said she would check about Taxicard vouchers handed in and refunded and get back to Panel members with this information.

- In response to Cllr Smart's query on how useful to manifesto is, Helen said it has been a useful means to structure discussion around what the Council does and if the council can offer greater support to disabled people around the manifesto's different themes.

The chair of the meeting, Sam Scharf reflected from the discussion that Panel members felt that Cambridge City Council does a large amount of work to support disabled people. He said that the Panel members had expressed that they felt more could be done widely communicate what the council does to support disabled people, so there are actions to follow up relating to communications, publicity and training.

24/14/EP Equality in Employment report 2023/24

Vickie Jameson (Recruitment Manager) presented key findings from the Equality in Employment 2023/24 report on the profile of Cambridge City Council's workforce. The full report provides a snapshot of the workforce as at 31 March 2024 and covers the workforce profile, recruitment, learning & development, starters, leavers, promotions, employment, pay bands and flexible working.

Key information shared in the presentation included:

- The activities that had taken place over the past year to promote equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging. Some of these mentioned were marking key events in the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging calendar, launching new Values and Behaviours for staff, continuing Disability Confident accreditation, reviewing the performance review process, reviewing the recruitment process and the imminent introduction of flexible Bank Holidays.
- Current workforce is at 859 employees, an increase from the previous year. Additionally, there have been 2233 applications, 190 offers of employment made, 112 leavers and 1309 course places attended.
- In relation to age, the 45 to 64 age groups are the most represented at the council, with the average age at 47. The council aims to undertake more proactive work to encourage young people to join the organisation – including attendance at careers fairs, providing work experience

opportunities, developing succession planning and career development, and the promotion of digital badging.

- 40% of the workforce have over 10 years' service and 37% have under 5 years' service.
- 6.63% of the workforce declared they had a disability, down from 7.37% (4 individuals). The People Team suspects, looking at sickness patterns and the age of the workforce, that staff often do not want to share they have a disability. 3.14% of staff have elected not to disclose this information. The council wants to improve on this. It is increasing its target of disabled people in the workforce to 15% as a proportion of the workforce reflective of the most recent census data which indicates 28.6% of economically active individuals have declared a disability.
- 10.3% of the workforce are from an ethnic minority, up from 9.09%. This means the council has exceeded its target of 10%. The council is looking to increase its target for next year to 20%, reflecting the most recent census data which indicates 23.3% of economically active individuals are from an ethnic minority background.
- There is a 49/ 51 split of female/ male in the workforce, which remains consistent with previous years. There is representation of female/ male across all pay bands. 22% of the workforce work part time, 67% of these being female. 81% of the male workforce work full time.
- 13.6% of staff have not declared their religion, this remains the same from the previous year. 41.5% of staff have no religion. 37.3% of staff identify as Christian, a decrease from the previous year.
- 5.59% of staff declare themselves as LGBTQ, a slight increase from last year. 77% of the workforce declare themselves as heterosexual, a decrease from last year. Individuals who prefer not to disclose their sexual orientation is 17.3%, a slight decrease from last year.
- There were 31 internal promotions. 32.2% of promotions were through more than one pay band. 12.9% of promotions were staff who declare themselves as from an ethnic minority background. 3.2% of promotions were staff who declare themselves to have a disability.
- There are 19 individuals on the Apprenticeship scheme; 10.5% of whom are from an ethnic minority background and 5.2% have declared a disability.
- In relation to recruitment, the number of applicants, shortlisted applicants and successful candidates declaring themselves as from an ethnic minority background and the number identifying themselves as disabled has increased.
- 19 flexible working requests made and more requests from female than male staff.

- Actions planned for 2024/25 and beyond to promote equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging in the council's workforce include:
 - Increasing targets for representation of disabled and ethnic minority staff members and encouraging staff (and candidates) to share their equality data for monitoring purposes.
 - Reviewing our reporting categories to make them more relevant and meaningful.
 - Undertaking an all-staff survey.
 - Reviewing and enhancing our employee benefits package.
 - Exploring requirements for the UNISON Anti-Racism Charter, Care Leaver Covenant and Homelessness Covenant and what involvement may look like for the organisation.
 - Planning actions to ensure that the Equality and Diversity aspects of the People & Culture Strategy are prioritised and we create a culture that is truly inclusive.

Lynsey Fulcher (Head of People) presented information on the gender and ethnicity pay gaps, and introduced the People and Culture Strategy:

- For the gender pay gap the council is legally required to report on this for the year prior to the current year. The mean pay gap is 0.95% and the median pay gap is 6.81% (in favour of men). For every £1 men earn, women earn 93 pence.
- One means the council is tackling the gender pay gap includes by introducing a new appraisal process will help us to ensure all employees regularly discuss progression and development and managers will be better at spotting talent. The council is also increasing and promoting flexible working practices, helping with retention and enabling all employees to continue to progress without compromising their work life balance.
- The mean ethnicity pay gap is 0.65% and the median pay gap is in favour of ethnic minority people at -4.96%. This year is the first time the council has monitored this.
- The People and Culture Strategy has been approved at committee. It is the link between the council's organisational and corporate priorities and its people. It links to the organisation's values and aligns HR activity to the needs of the organisation. Promoting Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging is a thread throughout every element of the strategy. The strategy is written jumping ahead to 2027 from perspective of what realising the council's ambitions will look like and how it will feel for an employee to work at the council. Now that the strategy has been approved an implementation plan will be developed.

Lynsey said that she would ensure that the People & Culture Strategy is circulated to the Panel.

The Panel asked questions and provided feedback on Lynsey and Vickie's presentations:

- Cllr Porrer said that it would be helpful to understand if there is a difference between length of service between part time and full-time staff, and also understand patterns relating to parental leave (including second parent leave). In relation to apprenticeships, Cllr Porrer said that it would be beneficial for the council to provide apprenticeships to people aged 16 and above who are unlikely to go into higher education.
- Another panel member said that it is reassuring that there has been an increase in ethnic minority representation within the council's workforce.
- Cllr Wade said it would be positive to increase the number of apprenticeships offered because this would support the Community Wealth Building Strategy. Relating to how disabled people are potentially not sharing they are disabled, Cllr Wade said that many people might not share they have disabilities until after a probation period at work as they do not wish to be labelled. The council needs to build trust in reporting. Cllr Wade also asked if councillors might be expected to meet the same values and behaviours developed for staff.
- Sam Scharf asked if the council might monitor profile of councillors as well as staff. Cllr Bird shared that she has been a councillor since 2011 and has never been asked about her personal characteristics.
- Cllr Porrer said that as pay for councillors is low it might be the case that people from diverse backgrounds would struggle to become councillors.
- Cllr Smart asked if the council itself could do more to influence political parties to increase diversity of candidates. Cllr Smart also shared it would be helpful to increase the proportion of young people working for the council, and to measure staff happiness (including outside work, as this impacts on people's experience of work). He asked about whether it was appropriate to use terminology of ethnic minority or people of colour.
- Sam Scharff said that despite some improvements around workforce diversity, the proportion of different groups working for the council is relatively low compared to that of the general population and the council needs to hold itself to account for improving its performance relating to this.

Cllr Flaubert said that to save on time she would send her questions directly to Vickie and Lynsey following the meeting.

In response to the comments and questions from Panel members:

- Vickie Jameson said that she would look into collecting and monitoring councillor profile data for the future.
- Helen Crowther said it would be best to ask staff for terminology they would prefer around ethnicity in relation to whether ethnic minority group, people of colour or another term should be used. There are differing views on terminology.

24/15/EP Any Other Business

None.

24/16/EP Date of Next Meeting

7 January 2025.

The meeting ended at 6.00 pm

CHAIR

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Update on Cambridge City Council's Youth Strategy 2024-27

Report produced January 2025 by Caroline Gill (Senior Community Development Officer for Children, Young People and Families)

- The strategy is due to be sent off to committee in mid-February with intended adoption in March.
- The first Youth Assembly has been held, which was jointly commissioned with Cambridgeshire County Council.
- Progress has been made on building the momentum of the Strategic Youth Partnership Board.
- The Youth Strategy focuses on 5 objectives:
 1. Supporting young people to be heard
 2. Access to play, leisure, sport and culture
 3. Helping young people to take part (championing routes to health and employment)
 4. Helping young people to feel safe and welcome in the city
 5. Using our assets to best effect

Youth Assembly

- To honour the first objective, the City Council joined forces with Cambridgeshire County Council to commission Citizens UK to host the first Youth Assembly for Cambridge city, held at the Cambridge Junction on 12th November.
- The Assembly was a pilot comprising of 16 institutions made up of young representatives from local schools, colleges and youth institutions.
- After a 6-month listening exercise with fellow students and colleagues, the young people whittled their concerns down to 4 key issues. Each one was backed up with testimonials and came with a request to the council and other decision makers to support them with specific projects or campaigns.
- Here is a link to a video on YouTube about the day:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEYTcVUozFQ>

4 key issues raised by young people at the Youth Assembly

Lack of safe spaces and activities

- Students highlighted a lack of safe places to socialise outside of school and home. This was accompanied by additional challenges in finding out what was already in existence that they could access.
- To help address this, Cambridge City Council committed to researching ways which better support young people to find out what's going on. In addition, the

council committed to work with the young people on a feasibility study to investigate the potential for a 'Youth Zone' to be developed in the city. The national charity that supports Youth Zones [OnSide - A national youth charity that's here for young people](#) will be presenting to the young people and to the Strategic Youth Partnership Board on 13th February on this.

- This issue resonates with objective 2 & 4 within the Youth Strategy illustrating that our objectives are in accordance with young people's concerns on the ground. It was also recognised within the Cambridge City Youth Survey led by Cambridgeshire County Council which highlighted that much of young people's social connectivity was limited to online interactions with peers outside time spent at home with their families. Having safe spaces to go was ranked second in importance to physical & mental health. *(Please note that the full analytical report on the Youth Survey findings is in development to be published in the coming months)*. Research recently commissioned by the City Council undertaken by 'Women in Sport' also highlighted concerns for young girls around safety in local parks, and the importance of green spaces in supporting mental wellbeing and physical activity. Here is a link to the report: [CCC Community Development - Women in Sport Research - All Documents](#)

Diminishing green spaces

- Primary school children raised concerns about the diminishment of local green spaces and natural habitats.
- To address this, Cambridge City Council is working with Kings College to support a campaign to preserve and increase the city's wild spaces.
- Milton Road primary school is leading a campaign encouraging local schools to plant wild meadows on their school grounds. Milton Road is leading the way on this with their meadow laid on their school ground at the end of last year.
- Concerns around the climate and environment was also highlighted in the Cambridgeshire County Council Youth survey (ranked 6 out of 10 as an issue of importance).
- Although environmental issues are not directly mentioned in objectives in Cambridge City Council's Youth Strategy, there is potential for the council to support this initiative through objective 5 by utilising its assets to support wild planting in our grounds and green spaces. Importance of parks acting as safe accessible spaces for teenage girls' physical and mental health was also highlighted by the 'Women in Sports' research, as mentioned above.

Work experience and part-time work

- Students highlighted concerns around accessing work experience, especially in a part time capacity.

- They asked businesses and employers to explore opportunities for students to better access a range of work experience opportunities.
- Cambridge Ahead committed to bringing partners together to meet the young people to explore the issue further.
- This falls within objective 3 of Cambridge City Council's Youth Strategy and was again highlighted within Cambridgeshire County Councils Youth survey ranked third by young people as an issue of importance.

Local bus services

- The final issue raised at the assembly related to the infrequency and unreliability of local bus services, along with problems with the app.
- Students asked the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to support a campaign for better services. This was matched with an 'ask' for him to explore extending the Tiger bus pass scheme out to all young students studying in the city, along with more youth representatives on the oversight board that oversees the bus companies.
- The Mayor agreed to meet with the students to learn more about how he could help.
- This falls within objective 3 of Cambridge City Councils Youth Strategy and was ranked 7 out of 10 as an issue of importance within the Cambridgeshire County Council's Youth survey.

Next Steps

- A Strategic Youth Partnership Board is in place to support young people in championing their requests made at the assembly.
- It's hoped this board will be able to commission work in the future and act as a strong foundation for supporting the objectives within the strategy.
- Information gleaned from the recent Youth Assembly, Cambridgeshire County Council's Youth Survey and the 'Women in Sport' research gives us good data to base direction of travel going forward for Youth Strategic Board to act upon.
- Cambridge City Council is currently developing an Action Plan that sits alongside the Youth Strategy, demonstrating how the council is meeting its objectives.
- The youth assembly format will be reviewed and its outcomes to determine if/when future assemblies may take place.

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Agenda item 5: Embedding health inequalities in paying due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty

Suzanne Goff (Health Prevention Programme Officer) and Helen Crowther (Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer) are currently looking into how Cambridge City Council can better develop links between the Preventative Health agenda and the council's Public Sector Equality Duty.

Preventative health involves preventing health problems before they occur and managing existing conditions well - so that people experience the best possible health and wellbeing over their lifetime.

It is important for us to better connect the preventative health agenda to our Public Sector Equality Duty because marginalised groups disproportionately face greater barriers to healthcare and increased health risks.

They may also experience poor health outcomes due to wider determinants of health, which Cambridge City Council may have influence over.

These determinants include social, economic, and environmental conditions: for instance, access to quality housing, education, community life, nutrition, green spaces, employment, and positive community relationships. For example, our Housing and Environmental Health teams handle issues like hoarding and making homes accessible for disabled people, and Economic Development helps develop ways to support people with long-term health conditions find jobs.

Wider inequalities then cause or contribute to health inequalities, defined as avoidable differences in health outcomes between groups or populations – such as differences in how long we live, or the age at which we develop health conditions.

For this agenda item the council is asking for the Panel's feedback on two areas:

- Proposed new wording to be included in the equality impact assessment (EqIA) form. In the EqIA the council plans to ask officers to *"Please consider the impact of any changes on health and wellbeing of different groups. In particular impacts around supporting people's health to be the best it can be for the longest period of time and tackling historical and structural barriers that cause poor health outcomes or prevent people accessing care/support with their health.*
- To gather views as to what needs to be included in guidance on completing the EqIA form to support officers to consider this in their EqIAs.

Additionally, this Panel item will also raise awareness of the Health Impact Assessment (HIA) process being proposed by the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service.

Policies in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) and Cambridge Local Plan (2018) set out the need to assess a new development's impact on health and wellbeing in that local area. This is part of a range of documents known as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). The new Health SPD provides further detail on how the health and wellbeing impacts in developments can be assessed by using a tool called Health Impact Assessments (HIAs).

HIAs are a method of assessing positive and negative health impacts of development for different groups. They function as a guiding framework for the design and delivery of a development, identifying how negative health impacts can be mitigated or prevented, how health benefits can be maximised, and how health impacts can be monitored in the long-term. You can find out more about how HIAs have been used in other areas of the Country by watching this helpful video by the Institute of Public Health: https://youtu.be/RiE5Bv_wDNA

The new Health SPD and HIA documents for Greater Cambridge are currently out for consultation until 24 January 2025. The documents and background papers can be found here: [Greater Cambridge Shared Planning - Draft Greater Cambridge Health Impact Assessment Supplementary Planning Document](#)

Further background paper for agenda item 5: Draft guidance for officers on considering health inequalities as part of the Equality impact assessment (EqIA) process

Link between the Public Sector Equality Duty and preventative health

Health is defined by The World Health Organisation as 'a state of complete physical, mental, and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity'. Building on this, it states that 'the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition'.

Health is not purely determined by individual behaviours or genetic factors. Wider inequalities can be related to individual circumstances, as well as historical or structural causes. Health inequalities are defined as avoidable differences in health outcomes between groups or populations – such as differences in how long we live, or the age at which we develop health conditions.

By acknowledging the link between health inequalities and wider inequalities experienced by equality groups, the Council could better support the preventative health agenda and further meet its obligations under the equality legislation. This is important as the Council and local health bodies are required to work closely together to deliver joined up local services.

Discrimination and health inequalities

Researchers have found that individual, cultural or structural discrimination impacts on health inequality (for example, see [Understanding how discrimination can affect health - PMC](#)), including through impacting on access to wider determinants of health.

The 'wider determinants of health' are things in people's lives that affect their health and wellbeing. These include money, the environment, and social factors. Not having equal access to these can cause extra stress, like losing a job, living in bad housing, and not being able to move up in society.

Discrimination between people, like rude comments or threats, can harm health just like other traumatic experiences. The pressure of dealing with inequalities and barriers to accessing services can cause stress and create mental health impacts. An example of this would be experiencing discrimination if you are from the LGBTQIA+ community - being asked inappropriate questions about your personal life/ choices.

What are wider determinants of health to consider in EqIAs?

In your EqIA consider health inequalities relating to wider determinants of health relating to the following areas/themes which your work might have impact on.

- Physical living environment – safe water and clean air, safe housing, community life and good access to public transport and safe roads all contribute to good health.
- Employment and working conditions – people in employment are often healthier, particularly those who have more control over their working conditions. Having a job that allows a person to flexibly balance their work and health needs is critical in supporting more people with disabilities to be able to work. As one of the largest groups that facing employment barriers and discrimination – (for instance, see [TUC – disability pay gap reaches staggering level of £4,300 a year | TUC](#)) – this is particularly important to address.
- Access to health services – access and use of services that prevent and treat disease influences health. For instance, the D/deaf community might struggle to access health services due to shortage of British Sign Language interpreters or older people may not be able to access online medical services if they don't have a suitable device.
- Social support networks – greater support from families, friends and communities is linked to better health. Cambridge has a higher-than-average number of people living in the city who are born outside of the UK and a relatively transient population. This means that people from some ethnic minority backgrounds who are new to the UK for work or studies might not have strong social support networks and might not be familiar with UK

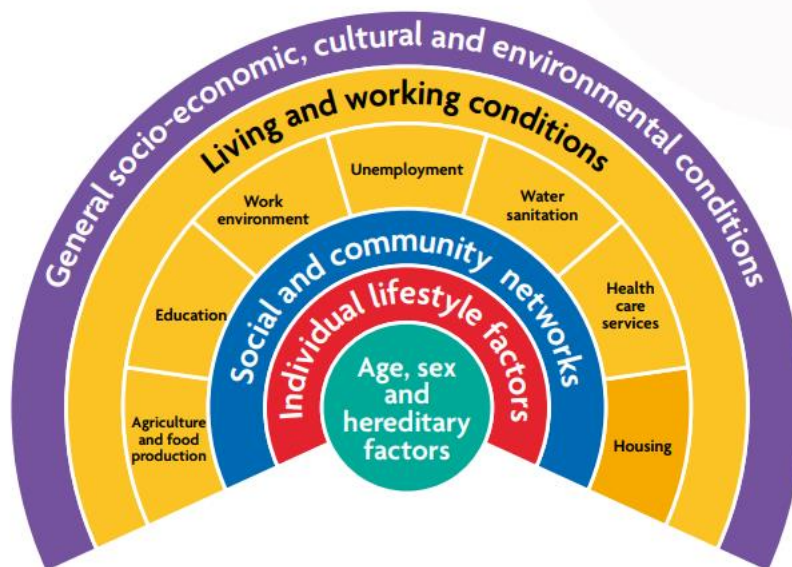
systems or have different experiences of the medical systems in their home countries.

- Culture – customs and traditions, and the beliefs of the family and community all affect health. Different cultures have different approaches to mental health for example or may have religious beliefs that need to be accounted for in providing public health services.
- Education – low education levels are linked with poor health, more stress and lower self-confidence. Many young people are reporting on an increase in mental health issues (for instance, see: [Youth Voice Census Results | 2024](#)) and this may impact how they access public services.
- Income and social status – higher income and social status are linked to better health. Oftentimes, the greater the gap between the richest and poorest people, the greater the differences in health. In Cambridge life expectancy is 11.6 years lower for people in the most deprived areas of Cambridge than in the least deprived areas. (See: [Public Health England's Local Authority Health Profile for Cambridge](#)).

For further clarity on the wider determinants of health, please refer to the World Health Organisation's webpage on the [Determinants of Health](#) or Public Health England's detailed overview of the [Wider Determinants of Health](#).

This is a useful diagram helping to summarise main factors influencing health:

The Main Determinants of Health



Source: Dahlgren and Whitehead (1991)

Agenda item 6: Development of Cambridge City Council's equalities objectives for 2025/26

Cambridge City Council has a legal obligation to produce one or more equality objectives at least every 4 years (for more information see [Public Sector Equality Duty: guidance for public authorities - GOV.UK](#)). The council's current equalities objectives are presented in the [Single Equality Scheme](#) that covers the period between 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2025. (Note that in March last year, the Scheme was extended by one year as it was due to end on 31 March 2024.)

The council will be producing a set of one-year interim objectives from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. These will help shape the council's approach during 2025/26 as the group redesigns that are part of the [Our Cambridge transformation programme](#) take effect, which will be implemented from late February 2025. The objectives will help identify the council's aims around how it plans to strengthen its work on equalities and cohesion longer-term within new structures. The 2025/26 objectives will go to the Environment & Communities (E&C) Scrutiny Committee for approval on 20 March 2025.

The proposed objectives for 2025/26 are as follows:

1. Prioritising needs of diverse communities in our ever-growing city.
2. Providing accessible and inclusive council services.
3. Helping ensure that people are able to participate and engage fully in their community in a safe, welcoming and inclusive city.
4. Establishing an inclusive and equitable culture within our workforce where our people feel a sense of belonging and purpose.

In the paper to the E&C Scrutiny Committee, under the 2025/26 objectives, key strategic commitments will be identified. Measures of success directly related to those commitments that the council is aiming towards shall also be captured in the committee report. This is different from the current approach in the Single Equality Scheme 2021 to 2025 where there are broad objectives and then actions and activities under those that Cambridge City Council has been reporting back on annually. The committee paper containing the 2025/26 objectives will also report back on progress over the last 4 years on the most significant and/or most impactful actions and activities under the previous Single Equality Scheme's objectives.

As the new structures settle in from the group redesigns, the council's ambition is to move from a focus on equality to a focus on equity. Equality is about providing people with equal rights and treatment, whereas equity recognises that each person has different circumstances. It is about each person getting what they need to survive or succeed—access to opportunity, networks, resources, and support — based on where they are and where they want to go.

At the Equalities Panel meeting, there will be a presentation on:

- the previous objectives and key areas of work and achievements over the Single Equality Scheme 2021 to 2025 to date.
- key statistics on demographics of people living in Cambridge from the Census 2021.
- the proposed new equalities objectives for 2025/26 and potential examples of key areas of work under each of them. As part of this, the Panel will be introduced to the concept of community power, which is relevant to the proposed first and third objectives set out above. Community power refers to the belief that people should have a greater say over the places in which they live and the services they use. Where possible, the council is hoping to change its relationship with communities by working alongside them in meeting their needs and priorities. Community power recognises communities have a wealth of knowledge and assets within themselves, which if understood and nurtured by practitioners and policymakers, has the potential to strengthen resilience and enable prevention-focused public services (for more information see: [The Community Paradigm for Public Services - New Local](#)).

Panel members will be asked to provide feedback on:

- Their thoughts on the objectives and the difference Cambridge City Council can make. This will be asked about in relation to the Panel's awareness of key issues experienced by different equality groups in the city.
- Views on the council's longer-term ambition to move from a strategy focused on equalities to one focused on equity, and what this might mean in practice.
- Their thoughts on barriers that different equality groups might experience to community power and ideas on how the council might address those.