

# Diversity, equity and inclusion

## Policy and plan for action

### 1. Our policy commitment

Locality works in a diverse society where massive inequality exists, often perpetuated and sustained by in-built structural issues. The places in which our members work can offer connection, community and identity but can also be defined by division on areas such as sex, race, gender and ability.

Diversity, equity and inclusion are hugely important areas for our work if we are to achieve our vision of a fair society where every community thrives. Our strategic plan adopted in 2019 restates our ambitions and commitment for us to play a leading role on diversity, equity and inclusion. Although we have made some progress in achieving this, we recognise that we still have a long way to go. Our board has committed us to being much more active in our approach to see real change. We will:

- Use our own lived experiences and ally with others to challenge all forms of discrimination to effect change
- Moving away from a non-racist stance, to an anti-racist position
- Recognise our own power and privilege and challenge ourselves to be the best we can in everything we do
- Understand we do not have all the answers in all these areas, and that this area is constantly evolving. We commit to educating and challenging ourselves and working with others to do the same
- Make sure we lead by example in our internal practices and policies from staffing to how we plan and prioritise our work
- Use the influence we have with our members and others to build a fairer society.

This policy commitment statement was signed by our board in 2020 and underlines all our activity in this area.

## 2. Our use of language

We use the acronym DEI as an abbreviation for diversity, equity and inclusion. While acronyms are inevitable, they can sometimes take away from the meaning of the words. It may be helpful to be clear on our meanings in the context of this report:

- Diversity – means bringing difference to Locality. This may be diversity of thought, experiences, background, etc. When harnessed and used well, diversity will bring about a richer experience for everyone involved in Locality
- Equity – means providing what is needed for a given set of circumstances. This can be for people, communities and organisations. It is NOT about treating everyone the same, but looking at needs and meeting those specific needs.
- Inclusion – means valuing the diversity we have. Making Locality feel like a place where everyone belongs, is heard and is valued.

The purpose in moving towards diversity, equity and inclusion is to create social justice –

D + E + I = social justice

In developing this plan we have been in a bit of a ‘chicken and egg’ situation around language – we know we need to change some of the language we use (e.g. BAME), and these are in the actions but in developing this plan we have had to make references to certain groups and communities and people from those groups and communities.

Some things in this plan also need further definition, e.g. when is a community organisation “led” by a defined group? How do we define this? Again, working this out needs time and discussion and is included as part of the action within the plan.

Once the use of language and definitions are resolved we may need to review the language and text of this plan; we see this as part of the iterative and consultative process that we need to go through.

## 3. Our detailed actions

We have been through a process of consulting with our staff and stakeholders. Everyone in Locality has a part to play in taking action. Our actions cover 4 key areas of work:

- Internally focused activity
- Activity with community organisations
- Marketing activity
- Activity with our partners

Below we set out our ambitions in each of these areas and then the detailed actions, identifying the actions for each team in Locality against these four areas of activity, is shown in appendix 1.

## 4. Internally focussed activity

### ***Our ambition***

‘Putting our own house in order’ is the byword for this series of actions. We know we have much more to do within Locality to address how we respond proactively to the structural inequalities that exist in society. It will be through being honest about where we are and challenging ourselves to do better that we will be able to:

- Ensure we are actively addressing inequity within Locality itself;
- Providing training, guidance and support to all our staff and trustees that will ensure they can act as effective allies in this field and reflect on how they work with others;
- Showcase our own experiences in order to have honest and open discussions with others on their experiences and practices.

## 5. Activity with community organisations

### ***Our ambition***

This area of activity covers work with our direct membership, but also other community organisations we come into contact with. We have to recognise our role; we don’t control the organisations we work with, but we can challenge, advise on best practice and support them to be the best they can be. We need to be clear on the various ways they can develop their own approaches, e.g. through developing a more diverse leadership within their organisations and also through the communities they serve and ensuring that all the communities have a stake and say in the organisation’s development.

We want to improve the diversity of our membership. While this has shifted recently there is still much more to do in terms of reaching a more diverse group of members and becoming a place of belonging for all community organisations. This will mean providing segmented offers and bespoke services to some groups to ensure equity in how we provide services. Our actions in this section are largely designed to:

- Reach out to a more diverse base of organisations we work with;
- Provide community organisations the confidence and tools to be genuinely inclusive in how they are run and how they provide services;

- Develop better capacity for community organisations run and led by people from diverse backgrounds to address historic inequities.

## 6. Marketing and communication activity

### ***Our ambition***

Marketing covers how we present ourselves to the world but also how we present and communicate the work of our members and community organisations. Showing how the power of diverse community organisations can contribute to a fairer society will help change the balance of structural inequality in our society. We need to get better at telling the stories and presenting the struggles faced by diverse communities as well as showcasing the successes and showing how the power of diverse community organisations can tackle entrenched social issues. Actions here will:

- Actively show the current inequalities in society and the effects of this on people's lives;
- Provide ideas, best practice, shared experiences and solutions that show how diverse organisations can be part of the answer;
- Develop pride, a sense of belonging and ownership in how we take this agenda forward.

## 7. Activity with our partners

### ***Our ambition***

Locality does not work alone. We must use our privilege and connections as a force for good. This includes taking a lead where necessary on issues around diversity, equity and inclusion as well as actively participating in the initiatives of others. We understand the need to build a stronger sector across the board and the need to rebuild trust with some communities. We will work hard with our various partners to build a coalition of support and allyship of which we can all be proud. Action in this part of the plan will:

- Actively challenge our partners and ourselves to do better;
- Ensure issues around DEI are considered and promoted in all that we do with our partners;
- Ensure programmes are designed with equalities issues front and centre to rebalance the distribution of assets and resources.

## 8. Our Key performance indicators

Appendix 1 shows the detailed actions we will undertake across all of the four areas above. Our DEI group will monitor progress towards these on an on-going basis. We also want to have a set of key performance indicators (KPIs); broad indicators showing whether we are travelling in the right direction on our DEI journey. Our KPIs have to be things we can measure and things that, on balance, are an indication that we are getting things right in the complex and multi-layered work around equalities.

### KPI 1 – Member diversity

*We will improve our baseline measurement and then see the proportion of members led by people from diverse communities and the diversity of leadership teams increase year on year.*

A crucial part of our work is having a truly diverse membership base; community organisations that are led by people from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. Only through this can we achieve our vision of a fair society for everyone. Our data is incomplete on the make-up of members and we need to improve this baseline this year and then see an increase year on year in the percentage of members led by people from diverse groups, with our priority areas being race and disability. We need ensure that such groups receive the support needed to ensure they are effective Locality members, working towards providing a diverse range of services to meet the needs of their local area. We also want to measure the general diversity of members' leadership teams and see this increase over time.

### KPI 2 – Staff diversity

*We will report staff diversity - particularly focused on race and disability and aim to see this increase year on year.*

Achieving a diverse staff team reflects how we are perceived externally as well as the structures we have internally. It is also an indication that we will be able to better support a more diverse membership through the lived experience of our staff team. In a relatively small team this is a long-term measure that relies on an element of staff turnover, as well as being skewed by small changes in the team. However, we feel it is an important and key measure of our success. We will also be reporting gender and race pay gaps.

### KPI 3 – Attitude and change

*We will improve our DEI scores from the staff survey year on year and develop systems to measure external perceptions of Locality over time.*

We have a good base line of staff responses on how we were doing on DEI from the Changeout report. We will run this survey annually to monitor progress and then change our plans and actions accordingly. This will look at how we are doing but also provide a forum for challenge. But we also need to know how others see us. We don't yet have systems for this, but will develop these and then aim for year on year increases.

## 9. Monitoring and review

This plan for action will be formally reviewed annually and reported to the board.

We will hold quarterly meetings of our DEI group (consisting of staff and board members) who will discuss upcoming issues, specific areas of this plan and bring in new areas of actions as they arise through the year as appropriate. The lead board members on our DEI group will report to each board meeting on discussions and actions.

Last reviewed  
July 2022