



Equality  
Diversity  
Inclusion



**Equalities Strategy**  
2021-2025

**Bolton**  
**Council**

## Our vision for equalities.

As Chief Executive of Bolton council, I am privileged to support this richly diverse borough where our people from different backgrounds and cultures live, work and study together.

With our partners, Bolton Council is committed to ensuring that our policies and our services meet the needs of everyone in the Bolton Family in a fair and equitable way.

Our promise to the people of Bolton is that we will use our resources fairly, to ensure that everyone can achieve their full potential wherever they live and whatever their background or circumstances.

As a major public sector organisation, we have a key role in seeking equality for our residents and our workforce, which means ensuring that our residents, our workforce and our partner organisations are treated fairly. This strategy focuses on how we will ensure that equality is a key consideration in everything we do.

Despite Covid-19 hitting us hard in Bolton, during the pandemic we have worked very closely with our partners and our communities, and by doing so we were able to successfully bring down infection rates. Working together helps us to achieve our goals, and to make things better for everyone who lives, works, studies in and visits our borough.

COVID-19 put a spotlight on the widespread inequalities experienced by our residents. It showed us that to deliver our 2030 vision of growth, prosperity and protecting the vulnerable, we must put equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of everything we do.

This strategy aims to address how we will deliver our duties and ambitions as an organisation in relation to equality, adhering to the Equality Act 2010, and therefore contribute to ensuring that our borough is a great place to live, work, study and visit.



### **Tony Oakman**

Chief Executive - Bolton Council



**“To deliver our 2030 Vision of growth, prosperity and protecting the vulnerable, we must put Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at the heart of everything we do.”**

# 1. Explanation

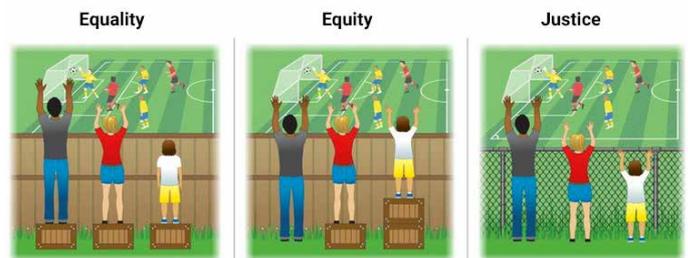
**Equality** means treating people fairly, with respect and providing everyone with the same opportunities to make the most of their abilities and lives. Equality is not about treating everyone in exactly the same way. It is important that each person is treated as an individual, ensuring their needs are met in a variety of ways.

**Diversity** is about recognising and celebrating differences. Bolton is made up of a rich and vibrant community of residents, businesses and visitors from many races, religions, abilities, ages and backgrounds. Diversity is about recognising, harnessing and valuing the attributes of our community, ensuring everyone can contribute to society and reach their full potential in an inclusive and fair environment.

**Inclusion** is about building an environment where our residents, businesses, visitors and workforce are equally valued, have a sense of belonging, feel safe and are respected and appreciated as members of our communities.

**Equity** recognises that everyone's circumstances and requirements are different. This means that the resources and opportunities available need to be distributed fairly in order for everyone to improve their situation.

**Justice** is the recognition that systemic barriers contribute to inequality, and that for a truly just society we need to work to identify and address the causes of inequalities.



Original source unknown





**“Bolton is made up of a rich and vibrant community, made up of residents, businesses and visitors from many races, religions, abilities, ages and backgrounds.”**

## 2. Our Vision for Bolton

Bolton is a diverse borough, where people from many different backgrounds and cultures live, work, study and visit. The council and its partners have a longstanding commitment to celebrating this diversity and promoting good relations between our diverse communities. As a public authority we are committed to ensuring that the policies and decisions we make fully support this commitment. In this way we will ensure that our services are appropriate and accessible for everyone.

Our shared vision for Bolton is for it to become a vibrant place, built on strong cohesive communities, successful businesses and healthy residents. Our aspirations are for Bolton to be a welcoming place where people choose to study, work and put down roots. We want Bolton to be a place where everyone achieves their full potential, regardless of background, circumstances, or where they live. Our vision is that by 2030 Bolton is an Active, Connected and Prosperous borough, where there is pride in our place, and where our people aspire to live their best lives. Our vision is built around six outcomes, which are supported by our Vision partners:

- **Start well:** Our children get the best possible start in life, so that they have every chance to succeed and be happy.
- **Live well:** The health and wellbeing of our residents is improved, so that they can live healthy, fulfilling lives for longer.
- **Age well:** Older people in Bolton stay healthier for longer and feel more connected with their communities.
- **Prosperous:** Businesses and investment are attracted to the borough, matching our workforce's skills with modern opportunities and employment.

- **Clean and green:** Our environment is protected and improved, so that more people enjoy it, care for it and are active in it.
- **Strong and distinctive:** Stronger, cohesive, more confident communities in which people feel safe, welcome and connected.

Our ambitions for the borough are also laid out in our corporate plan, which aims to build healthier, stronger and safer communities, where everyone has the opportunity to grow and prosper in a fair society. We also recognise the importance of connecting with our diverse communities and establishing more accessible ways to engage with our residents and stakeholders. To underpin our aspirations for Bolton, we recognise the need to support, strengthen and develop our workforce and infrastructure, enabling our staff to be more informed and better able to represent the communities they serve.

The objectives outlined in this Equalities Strategy for 2021 – 2025 will help us to sustain our corporate ambitions for Bolton's future. In doing so, they will help us meet our duties as a council to protect the rights of our residents and our staff who are at risk of discrimination.

The Bolton 2030 Vision and Bolton Council Corporate Plan are both being refreshed to consider our wider role as a council and the future aspirations that we, our partners and our residents have for the borough. The objectives of these crucial plans will inform future iterations of the Equalities Strategy 2021 – 2025.

### 3. The Bolton context



All data was correct at the time of publication, gathered from **Office of National Statistics sources** and **Bolton JNSA**

# Our Workforce

Bolton Council's  
workforce

# 3394



Gender:

men  
**982 29%**

women  
**2412 71%**



Race:

White  
**2827  
83%**

Asian/Asian British  
**256 8%**

Black/African/  
Caribbean  
**54 2%**

Other  
**62 2%**

Unknown  
**151 5%**



Age:

16-25 **71 2%**

26-45 **1092 32%**

46-65 **2164 64%**

66-85 **67 2%**



Disability:

# 125 4%



LGBT+:

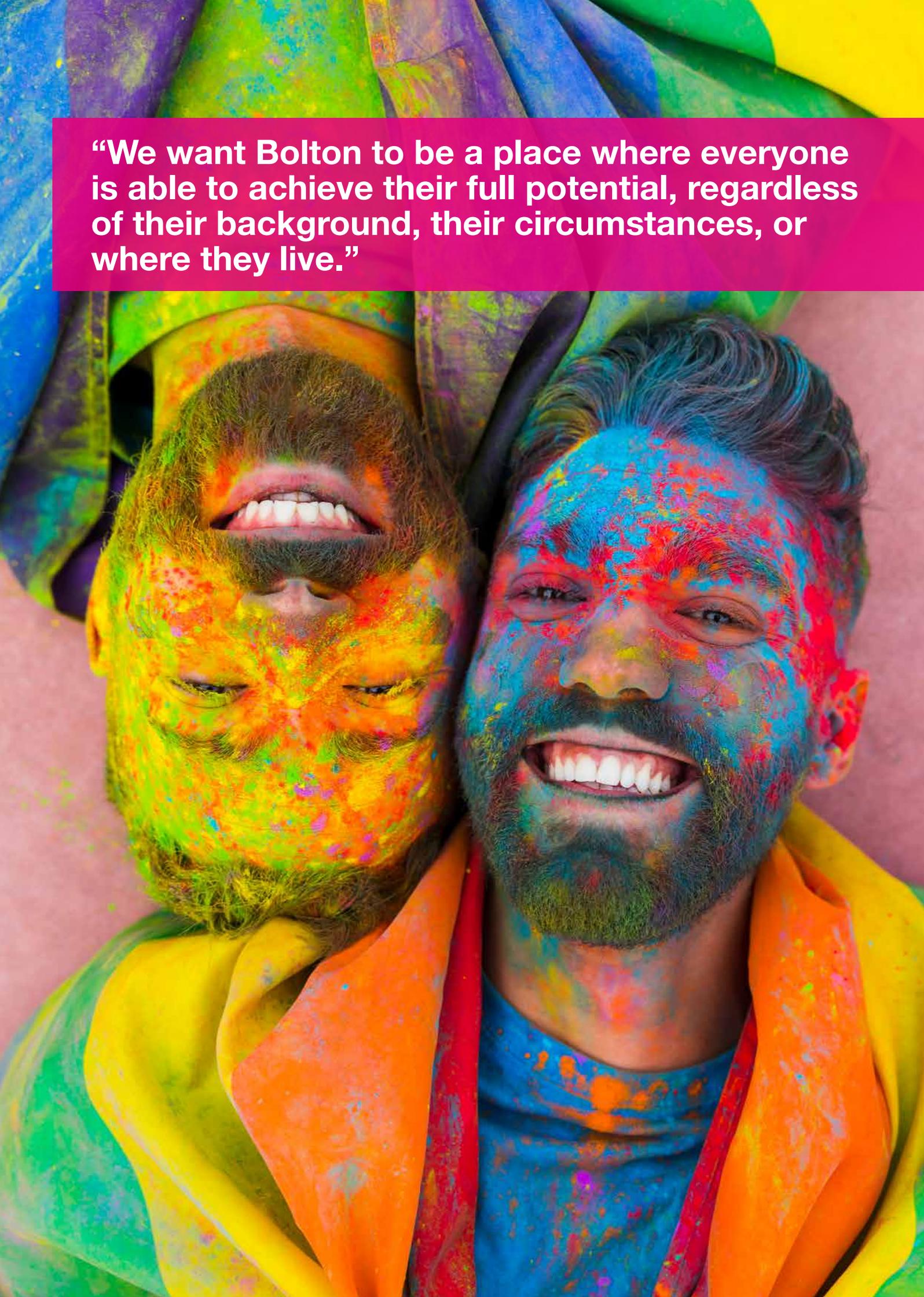
# 72 2%



Maternity:

# 60

All data was correct at the time of publication (2021)



**“We want Bolton to be a place where everyone is able to achieve their full potential, regardless of their background, their circumstances, or where they live.”**



## 4. Legislation context

This policy strategy describes how the council is responding to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 as part of its core business.

The Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') sets out the law around equality in Great Britain. The Act provides protection against discrimination for the following range of diversity groups (or 'protected characteristics'):

- Age
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Race (including ethnic or national origins; colour; nationality)

In addition to the protected characteristics set out by the Act, Bolton Council believes it is also important to consider socio-economic conditions, caring status and gender identity as part of its work around equality.

Most of the council's policies and decisions are already rooted in principles of equality and fairness, in support of our broader ambitions for Bolton. In embracing our duties under the Act, the council will continue to ensure that it seeks all opportunity to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The council will also continue to take every opportunity that it can as a policy maker, partner, provider of services and an employer to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.

- Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

As a public sector body, the council is also committed to meeting its duties by publishing:

- The equality objectives we seek to deliver.
- Equality information at least annually, in order to show how the council is complying with the general equality duty.

**As well as the Equality Act 2010, the council is subject to the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. This Act sets out a framework for the basic rights and freedoms that belong to every individual. Bolton Council is committed to ensuring that we consider every opportunity to promote or protect any relevant human rights in our policies, practices and service delivery.**





**“Our aspiration is to build a culture for professional development, where individuals can learn more about Bolton’s diverse and vibrant communities, as well as how to respond to and invest in the aspirations of our local people.”**

## 5. Our ambition

Bolton Council, working with our colleagues in the Trade Unions, are committed to creating a culture where equality, diversity and inclusion are part of everything we do. The aspirations, which are set out in our Vision plan, are underpinned by our duties as outlined in the Equality Act. To achieve these aspirations, we will strengthen the infrastructure that supports this work and consider the wider context.

Bolton Council welcomes the recommendations from the 2021 Greater Manchester Inequalities Commission report, 'The Next Level – Good Lives for all in Greater Manchester', which aims to tackle the full extent of inequalities brought to light as a result of the pandemic. We will consider the recommendations from the report as part of our ongoing work to reduce inequalities in their broadest context, including inequalities in health, wealth and opportunity in Bolton.

### Our equality objectives (2021–2025)

#### 1. Embed equalities training and awareness at all levels of the organisation

Understanding our equality, diversity and inclusion duties are everyone's responsibility. As a leading employer in the town, we have a duty to nurture our workforce, councillors and wider partners, ensuring they are fully aware of and can comply with our legislative obligations. Equally, we want to provide an environment where people feel included and supported and are treated fairly. As well as providing formal training for staff, councillors and partners, our aspiration is to build a culture for professional development that encourages people to learn more about Bolton's diverse and vibrant communities, as well as how to respond to and invest in the aspirations of our local people.



## **2. Review and improve our processes around equalities and diversity demonstrating due regard to the Public Sector Equalities Duty and transparency in our decision making**

In order to best support our staff, residents and stakeholders, the council will review its current processes and practices for supporting equalities, diversity and inclusion.

The pandemic has shone a light on inequalities in our communities and has highlighted the challenges and barriers faced by particular groups. To improve our services, we will carry out a review of our equalities processes, including Equality Impact Assessments.

Equality Impact Assessments are a legal requirement, which enable the organisation to carry out a systematic review of the likely impacts our work may have on different groups of people. The review is an opportunity to update our systems for monitoring the annual cumulative impacts experienced by particular groups and will offer greater transparency for reporting. It will also strengthen our understanding of the support needs of our communities, so that we can respond to these more effectively.

## **3. Ensure that our collection of equalities data is robust and sufficient to provide the required information for our decision-making processes**

To support this objective an Equality, Diversity and Improvement Group will be established, made up of key personnel from across the organisation, with responsibility for equalities. Representation will reflect a broad cross-section of experience,

knowledge and interest in equalities. This group will review the current methodologies and delivery models for administering our statutory obligations around equalities, as well as the infrastructure for gathering data that helps to inform decision making.

These objectives will be reviewed annually in line with our Corporate, Vision and Inequalities strategies and updated where appropriate.





**“Equality means treating people fairly, with respect and providing everyone with the same opportunities to make the most of their abilities and lives”.**



## 6. Delivering the outcomes

This strategy will be delivered through a framework of annual action plans. These plans will be informed by up-to-date equalities data and other relevant evidence and insight, for example intelligence from the Bolton Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. In addition, a review of the 2021 census data will be used to inform future plans when it is published in 2022.

This strategy and supporting action plans will be regularly monitored by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Improvement Group, which will be accountable to the council's senior leaders who will drive forward the delivery of the strategy.

Overall accountability for the implementation of the strategy will be held by the council's Corporate Leadership Team.

All staff, elected members and contractors will have responsibility to comply with

the requirements of our approach, by demonstrating best practice and fostering good relations with all stakeholders, residents and partners.

Each year, the council will produce an end-of-year progress report against plans for implementation, which will offer an opportunity to reflect on challenges and achievements and also inform our plans for the coming year.

If any new legislation or best practice measures are introduced that directly impact this strategy during 2021-2025, these will be reviewed and where appropriate will be incorporated. The next formal review will take place in January 2025.

For further information on Bolton Council's commitment to equalities, diversity and inclusion, please refer to our webpage:

**[www.bolton.gov.uk/policies-strategies-procedures/equality-diversity](http://www.bolton.gov.uk/policies-strategies-procedures/equality-diversity)**.