



Equality and Diversity Strategy 2023 – 2026

1. Introduction

People are the foundation of our success. We respect and value the diversity of our employees and service users regardless of personal attributes where these are unrelated to employment and service provision, including the legally protected characteristics of:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender reassignment;
- Marriage and civil partnership;
- Pregnancy and Maternity;
- Race;
- Religion or belief;
- Sex; and
- Sexual Orientation.

Valuing Equality and Diversity is reflected in Viewpoint's values, and in how we treat our customers, the wider public we serve, and one another. To deliver our services effectively our policies, processes, interactions and decision-making must be:

- Fair
- Inclusive
- Accessible
- Responsive

Promoting equality and valuing diversity is central to providing excellent customer service. We know that organisations that deliver exacting standards on equality and diversity deliver exacting standards for their services. We at Viewpoint strive to be one of those organisations.

In addition to reflecting our own values and our commitment to providing excellent customers services, we must also meet legal and regulatory requirements and expectations regarding equality, diversity, and human rights. To meet these requirements, it is necessary to gather appropriate equality data, lawfully.

This Equality and Diversity Strategy is an organisation wide strategy that needs to be understood and owned across Viewpoint.

Attached to this strategy is our three-year Equality and Diversity action plan. The specific actions to be taken to deliver the Strategy will be agreed each

year within and across all staff groups and services, and linked to our Strategic Objectives, Internal Management Plan, and relevant operational plans at directorate, team, and individual levels as part of our business planning process. This will mean that the ownership and accountability for individual pieces of work is clear.

2. Viewpoint Equality and Diversity Aims

Our vision at Viewpoint is that we will be an exemplar organisation, demonstrating excellence in equality and diversity issues across all areas of policy, practice, decision-making and influencing others through the exacting standards that we set.

We will meet the legal and regulatory expectations upon us, thereby ensuring that in all aspects of our work we will be compliant as well as Fair, Inclusive, Accessible and Responsive.

Our Equality and Diversity vision will be realised through all our staff working together to achieve:

- An understanding of the diverse needs of our **customers** so that we can provide an accessible and responsive service to all who need it;
- Positive outcomes for our **customers** across the organisation focusing on all groups within our communities to ensure their needs are met;
- A workforce that includes a diverse range of people at all levels, reflecting the communities we serve and the populations around us;
- An open and inclusive culture within Viewpoint; and
- A good reputation for understanding and managing equality and diversity effectively.

3. Viewpoint Equality and Diversity Outcomes

We will ensure that we meet the aims detailed above, through:

- Promoting positive customer care strategies;
- Enhancing tenant participation opportunities; and
- Meeting specific business objectives, through a deeper understanding of the equality profiles of our customers, enabling the delivery of tailored services.

4. Viewpoint Equality and Diversity Objectives

Within this strategy, we have set several objectives that detail how through valuing difference to reach shared goals we will achieve our defined aims and outcomes.

Cultural Objectives

From the core of our organisation, we will:

- Continue to build on an open and inclusive workplace culture, in which the differences that all our people bring to Viewpoint are valued, and equality of opportunity is advanced for all;
- Continue to take a zero-tolerance approach in relation to inappropriate behaviour, discrimination and bullying and ensure our employees will feel confident to tackle any such behaviour.

Objectives for our Customers

For our customers Viewpoint will be an organisation that will:

- Be easy for people to contact and communicate with;
- Promote equal access to our service for all members of the community;
- Have information that everyone can understand;
- Listen to people to understand their needs and tailor our service accordingly;
- Have employees and customers who accept other people whatever their background;
- Have employees and customers who will further understand the advantages of diversity; and
- Ensure change is effectively communicated to reduce anxieties for employees and customers.

Objectives for our Employees

Viewpoint will:

- Ensure that recruitment is fair, open and attracts diverse talent, thereby continuing to attract, develop and retain high-calibre, motivated people, from a diverse range of backgrounds, at all levels, who are performing well to fulfil our strategic and operational objectives;
- Ensure that employees receive Equality and Diversity information and training at their initial induction, and ongoing learning in the workplace, with equal opportunities for all learning and development activities;
- Have employees with an increased understanding of Equality and Diversity issues, and this will help improve confidence when dealing with matters in these areas;
- Have an Equality and Diversity policy and practices that are understood and followed by all employees;
- Empower Viewpoint employees to be Champions for Diversity and to challenge any behaviour that is unacceptable;
- Have employees who understand they all have responsibility for Equalities and Diversity; and
- Have employees who respect and trust each other and feel valued.

5. How we will achieve our objectives

We will achieve our vision of equality and diversity through the provision of a suite of documents. This strategy sits at the top and through embedding a culture of openness and inclusivity where the differences that all our people bring to Viewpoint are valued, and equality of opportunity is advanced for all. Our suite of documents will include:

- This equality and diversity strategy.
- Equality and diversity policy.
- Equality and diversity procedure.
- Equality and diversity action plan.
- Equality impact assessment.
- Diversity monitoring.

6. How we will monitor our progress

The monitoring of progress against this Strategy will be undertaken through Viewpoint's performance monitoring system. This will include monitoring of the systems and processes, which we implement in support of this Strategy.

This approach will mean that work towards our Equality and Diversity vision becomes part of our core activities.