

## Disability Inclusion Action Plan 21/22

This plan has been informed by available data, best practice and feedback from Level Playing field on areas that are likely to have greatest impact on workplace disability inclusion. It aligns to the broader D&I agenda, reflects current priorities in the SIPs and future areas of activity. It includes **Short term**, **Medium term**, **Long term** actions, and focuses on both education and context, as well as approaches to engage managers with disability inclusion and help gain traction on the ground to achieve a change in culture.

### 1. Increase declaration/representation rates of employees with disabilities to better reflect the communities we serve

#### Key issues identified from data:

- At March 2021, Disabled staff made up 3.95% of KCC's workforce (402/9449) – the ratio of those who are considered disabled has reduced very slightly from 2020. However, the disability status was not known for 12.34% of the substantive workforce who preferred not to say or it was unknown (1254/9449). KCC remains under-represented compared to the profile of the community we serve (17.6% as per Census 2011 data, although this reflects the whole population, rather than economically active)
- The average age of KCC's workforce is 45, and we know the chronic nature of conditions come with age.
- In terms of recruitment those who declared themselves to have a disability made up 5.4% of applicants to posts within KCC in 2021, 7.1% of those shortlisted were disabled and 5.5% of recruited staff were considered disabled, slightly up from the previous year.
- By comparison, in KCC's 2019 Staff Survey, 5.4% of staff reported themselves as disabled (231 staff out of 4,298 permanent or fixed term/temp staff), with 9.14% of respondents who preferred not to say or declined to answer the question (393/4,298). This potentially shows we are under-estimating the % of disabled staff in the organisation, and the higher proportionate response rate in the survey could be due to the anonymity of the data.

Priority	Action	Lead	By When	Milestone	Notes/Progress	RAG
1	Increase in declaration rates through promoting the importance of disability declaration in ongoing communications and/or a new campaign e.g. linked to the inclusion feature in Sept 2021.	PSM/PSA, Engagement Manager, support from HR tbc	March 2022 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion in engagement plan (April 21)</li> <li>• Data Re-Ask equivalent campaign delivered (Sept 21 onwards)</li> <li>• Development of new recruitment website to help with increased declarations at application stage (date tbc 2021) and increase applications from</li> </ul>	<p>Need to build trust and confidence in data collection amongst staff with disabilities</p> <p>Continue to encourage engagement from LPF staff network to assist with the campaign.</p> <p>Include Q: Do you consider yourself to have a disability, impairment or condition?</p>	

				individuals with disabilities	
2	Making our recruitment processes inclusive and accessible including getting adjustments in place before starting new role/as part of onboarding	PSM/PSA, HR	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with LPF on design of recruitment toolkit</li> <li>Understand the experiences of people who apply including perceived or real barriers in the process</li> <li>Analyse New Joiners Survey (date tbc)</li> </ul>	
2 – new	Targeted recruitment of disabled staff	PSM/PSA, HR	March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft positive action in recruitment paper for Policy Group discussion (Sept 2021)</li> <li>Secure funding to pilot targeted recruitment (date tbc)</li> <li>Pilot recruitment campaign (date tbc)</li> </ul>	e.g. <a href="https://www.evenbreak.co.uk">https://www.evenbreak.co.uk</a> , <a href="https://www.vercida.com/uk/employers">https://www.vercida.com/uk/employers</a>
2 - new	Explore work trials via Kent Supported Employment	PSA	Date tbc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	
1 – existing	Publish disability data as part of annual report and in careers section of website	PSM/PSA	June 2022 tbc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect data (March 2022)</li> <li>Draft annual report (April 2022 tbc)</li> <li>Include in Inclusivity Indicator (date tbc)</li> </ul>	
1 – existing	Workforce planning to drive up diversity in teams	PSM, HR	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	<i>Main driver for workforce planning is about future skills (but diverse talent could be an outcome)</i>
1	Increase diversity in apprenticeship and graduate programmes	OD	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	Link to targeted recruitment and workforce planning

## 2. Developing a culture where disabled staff (and candidates) feel confident and reach their full potential

### Key issues identified from data:

- In the 2019 staff survey, those who were disabled reported being significantly less positive with 77% of disabled staff respondents expressing a positive response to questions relating to inclusion and fair treatment compared to 85% of non-disabled staff. Similarly, in relation to wellbeing questions, 71% of disabled staff responded positively compared to 80% of non-disabled staff, and 68% of disabled staff responded positively to questions around organisational culture compared to 76% of non-disabled staff. 49% of disabled staff versus 65% of non-disabled staff responded positively in relation to learning and development.
- From the Work and Wellbeing surveys during 2020-21 and anecdotal feedback, disabled staff reported that their experience of the organisation has improved as a result of the working flexibly/from home/the work environment has made it easier to manage their disability and create more of a level playing field. Levels of sickness absence have also reduced across KCC.
- In 2021, the percentage of Disabled staff achieving a TCP rating of excellent or outstanding remained relatively static, while for those without a disability it increased (39.6% to 42%). In 2020, a lower percentage of Disabled staff achieved a TCP rating of excellent or outstanding compared to those without a disability. (33.9% compared with 39.6%). In 2019 survey, of those disabled responses, 38% were positive about their pay and benefits compared to 51% of non-disabled staff.
- The number of reasonable adjustments in place in 2021 has decreased by 8.6% from 2020. The disability category of Non-visible increased in 2021 while Mental Health and Emotional dropped back down after it's surge in numbers in the previous year.
- Turnover for staff who are considered disabled was down to 8.6% in 2021 from 14.4% in 2020, and from 19% in 2019. This compares with turnover for those without a disability at 8.6% in 2021 and 12.4% in 2020, a narrowing of the gap. The overall organisation turnover rate also decreased during this period (12.7% in 2020 and 20.9% in 2019).
- In UK, 1 in 5 have a disability, 80% of these are hidden (National Health survey 2018) which reinforces the need to consider disability wider than just physical disabilities

Through the OD plan, work is already underway on embedding the new values, cultural attributes and behaviours, and Inclusive leadership which is likely to have an impact over the longer term. There is a continued role for CMT and senior leadership to champion disability inclusion and inclusion more broadly.

Priority	Action	Lead	By When	Milestone	Notes/Progress	RAG
1 – existing	Encourage and promote the stories/lived experiences of the contributions of disabled staff in a range of roles across KCC and on social media.	Engagement manager, LPF, PSA, HR support with social media/external comms?	Green tbc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of communications plan (date tbc)</li> <li>• Promote stories on social media (date tbc)</li> </ul>	Kate/Julian already made connection between internal/external comms stories	

	Including managers sharing how they manage staff with disabilities – showcase good practice examples					
1 – existing	Utilise the opportunity for the celebration of International Day of Disabled People on 3 December 2021 to promote and explore the issues identified via the data.	PSA, Engagement manager, HR support to LPF	December 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan content and theme of IDODP (date tbc)</li> <li>• Agree plan (date tbc)</li> <li>• IDODP event delivery (3 December 2020)</li> <li>• Promote the day on social media</li> </ul>	Use staff group budget to organise an event for IDODP? Access to Work event/promotion?	
1 - existing	Use engagement forums such as T200 and Challenger, and external speakers to talk about disability/gain traction on the ground	OD/PSM/PSA	Autumn/Winter 2021 tbc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build into T200 timetable (date tbc)</li> <li>• Design content (date tbc)</li> <li>• Deliver session (date tbc)</li> </ul>	How can we influence attitude and approach on the ground, building on personalisation, conversations and consequences? Use external speaker to provide context from which to springboard other activity e.g. what it means in practice	
2 - existing	Use Culture Audits to weave in inclusion conversation	OD	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture Audits take place (date tbc)</li> <li>• Interventions delivered (date tbc)</li> </ul>	Use touchpoints to have conversation about inclusion	
2 - new	Explore the development offer on disability awareness/disability equality training/introduce resources to support all staff in terms of understanding disability in the workplace/appropriate	OD/L&D, HR	Date tbc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis to understand what gaps are present in staff knowledge and awareness (date tbc) – via OD groups?</li> <li>• Present findings to CEG (date tbc)</li> <li>• Identify resources required to deliver training to staff</li> </ul>	Equip managers to effectively challenge negative comments or behaviour towards disabled people at work  Ensure line managers have access to info and resources to support conversations around	

	use of language/external speakers  <i>What would this look like? E.g. neurodiversity, inclusive communications etc. Digital accessibility training - tbc</i>			(date tbc)	disability and requests for support  <i>Opportunity to use Scope's End the Awkward campaign video to support talking about disability?</i>	
2 - existing	Carry out accessibility audits of KCC buildings and input into future planning of office estate	James Sanderson	Date tbc	TBC based on existing project plan but e.g. • Completion of access audits (date tbc) • Implementation of timetable of access improvements to start (date tbc )	TBC	
1 - existing	Continuous improvement of digital accessibility	PSA/James Church	Ongoing	• Directorate engagement with Microsoft AI Good for Grant – tbc • Digital accessibility embedded in engagement plan (completed?) • Ongoing comms and engagement on digital accessibility	BSL task and finish group in place following a paper ASCH took to CMT on BSL accessibility options – HR/OD and Engagement to input  Links with digital skills programme	
2 - new	Inclusion passport (to inc. principles of wellness action plan and disability passport)	PSA/HR/LPF	Date tbc	• Engage staff groups on design • Launch of Inclusion passport (date tbc)	Reviewed example from another local authority	
1 - new	Renew Disability Confident standard - Use framework to understand gaps and priority areas of focus	PSA/HR	Nov 2021	• Collate evidence and understand gaps (Sept 2021) • Submission for renewal (Oct 2021)	Aspiration to achieve Disability Leader in 2022 – make improvements on level 2 status during 2021/22	

	- Understand how to become a Disability Confident leader			• Status renewed (Nov 2021)		
1 - existing	Improve how we collate details of workplace adjustments and how these are delivered in practice to monitor trends	PSA/HR, BMCR	Nov 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project plan and timeline agreed (date tbc)</li> <li>• Adjustments collated (Nov 2021)</li> <li>• Analyse data and identify trends (Dec 2021)</li> </ul>	Explore technological solution Include satisfaction levels with adjustments	
3 - new	Progression and pay - Disability pay gap reporting and representation of disabled staff as a proportion of the workforce in each pay grade	PSA/BMCR	March 2022 tbc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect mean and medium average earnings of disabled and non-disabled staff (date tbc)</li> <li>• Publish pay gap data as part of annual report (date tbc)</li> </ul>	Usefulness of data is dependent on improving declaration rates  Informs workforce planning	

### 3. Involve and engage with Disabled staff in decision-making

#### Key issues identified from data:

- In the 2019 staff survey, of the disabled staff responses, 59% expressed a positive response compared to 67% of non-disabled staff in relation to questions on employee engagement.
- Work and wellbeing survey – no trends

Priority	Action	Lead	By When	Milestone	Notes/Progress	RAG
1 – new	Hold a Safe Space workshop (form of reverse mentoring) between LPF and CMT with a theme of disability in the workplace	PSM/OD	September 2022 tbc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss topic areas with LPF (date tbc)</li> <li>• Arrange workshop dates in line with CMT availability</li> </ul>	TBC – once Safe Space workshop has been piloted to address race equality	
2 - new	Engage LPF staff network in the development of theme and	PSA/Engagement manager	Date tbc 2022	• Develop theme and content (date tbc)	<i>Do we have capacity to mark both IDPD and Purple</i>	

	delivery of KCC's contribution to Purple Tuesday. <a href="https://purpletuesday.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Purple-Tuesday-Brochure-2021.pdf">https://purpletuesday.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Purple-Tuesday-Brochure-2021.pdf</a>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver Purple Tuesday Event (date tbc)</li> <li>• Promote the day on social media</li> </ul>	<i>Tuesday? How does this link with directorate activity – aim for Nov 22 instead?</i>	
1 - new	Engage with LPF staff group in the development of and delivery of International Day for Disabled People.	PSA/HR/Engagement Manager	December 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan content and theme of IDODP (September 2021)</li> <li>• Agree plan (October 2021)</li> <li>• IDODP event delivery (3 December 2021)</li> <li>• Promote the day on social media</li> </ul>	Staff group budget available for the delivery of an event?	
1 - new	Engage disabled staff in the delivery of reasonable adjustment training as part of training on managing ill-health or standalone training.  <i>What is the current offer? How does this link to disability confident standard? Disability inclusion/challenging stereotypes?</i>		September 22 tbc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore how stand-alone training could be delivered on reasonable adjustments aimed at wider audience of employees (date tbc)</li> <li>• Start delivering training (date tbc)</li> </ul>	Relies on LPF availability, confidence to share stories	
1 - existing	Encourage LPF members to engage with the delivery of strategic priorities e.g. new KCC values, culture, flexible working, workforce planning, resourcing activity		Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite LPF to Culture Boost sessions, T200 etc.</li> <li>• Identify specific projects that LPF group members can get involved with (date tbc)</li> </ul>	TBC	
1 - existing	Review Staff Survey questions in relation to disability to inform	Engagement Manager/PSM/PSA	Oct 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree additional/revised questions (Sept 2021 tbc)</li> </ul>	Existing D&I questions from 2019 survey still relevant, and	

	decision making				responses will be analysed by protected characteristic to inform our approach	
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N.B. Actions to improve Mental health, as a non-visible disability, are captured separately as part of the Mental Health at Work Commitment delivery plan 2021-22.

Feedback from LPF

Managers have the biggest impact on disability inclusion. There are some amazing examples of great management that has made life so much easier for some of members but also some more negative experiences that leave colleagues feeling ignored, anxious and frustrated.

Continued promotion of good conversations and the toolkit of support of managers is a priority

Scope for more personable training that could influence a change in attitude in a way that the material and tools aren't? *Allow refreshed development to bed in first....?*

The impact of system changes on our staff, something that seems very small can have a big impact both for the positive or negative. Over the last 12 months many of these changes have improved accessibility and reduced issues arising, which is a credit to the culture we have around considering the impact on those with disabilities so it would be good to see this continue. Ongoing consultation with LPF to input on any developments