

Friday 25th March 2022

Leeds City Council statement to staff about Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

This is an important statement about making sure **everyone** in the council is treated fairly and with respect, one of our core values. It builds on previous communications and emphasises the behaviours we can all expect of each other at work, as well as potential consequences of inappropriate behaviour.

In 2020 the Council and the Black Asian and Minority Ethnic staff network (grass-roots group) published [a joint statement to stand together against all forms of racism and inequality](#) in our council and city.

Everyone should be able to bring their whole self to work and feel warmly welcome in our team, and there is no place for racism or any form of discrimination in Leeds City Council. A clear commitment was given to all BAME colleagues in our organisation, for action and change, including commitments that we will:

- *Do all we can to eliminate racism and inequality – wherever we find it.*
- *Take a zero-tolerance approach to racism in the workplace and out within the communities we serve, taking all allegations of racism seriously.*
- *Challenge and address inappropriate behaviour.*

Sadly, racism remains part of society. It affects us here in Leeds and in our own workplace.

Our commitment to tackling inequality extends beyond race to cover all council colleagues, including those who are most likely to experience discrimination. For avoidance of any doubt, and in line with our values and behaviours, we would like to make clear the following:

To all colleagues:

- We encourage you to come forward if you have concerns – and will support you when you do.
- We know it can be difficult to raise concerns, especially if it's about your own team and colleagues or more senior managers, but it's still important that you do.
- We will act where needed.

To all managers:

- You must act if you see or hear something that is not right.
- You cannot be a bystander and let discrimination and poor behaviour go unchallenged.
- You must seek support if unsure what to do.

And as a clear indication of our intent:


- We will discipline colleagues and managers where this is necessary.
- Where there has been a proven serious breach of our code of conduct, values or legislation, dismissal is likely. This includes hate crimes and hate incidents.

We continue to work hard on the wider equality, diversity, and inclusion agenda in partnership with colleagues, managers, trade unions, our front-line staff networks and broader partners and stakeholders and we thank everyone for the ongoing support on the journey to be the Best Council and Best City.

We know from conversations with teams across all services just how much the last two years has affected everyone, and in moving forward to a brighter future now is the right time for us all to commit to this council being somewhere you can be yourself and be confident that all our differences will be respected and valued. If we were all the same the world would be a boring place and Leeds is a city and we are a council where different people can and must thrive.



Tom Riordan CBE, Chief Executive



Councillor James Lewis, Leader of Leeds City Council