

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): People, Culture and Inclusion Committee of the Barbican Centre Board	Dated: 10 th December 2025
Subject: Barbican Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy Update	Public report: For Information
This proposal: • delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes • provides statutory duties • provides business enabling functions	Diverse engaged communities Vibrant thriving destination Public Sector Equality Duty
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of funding?	N/A
Has this funding source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of:	David Farnsworth, Interim CEO
Report author:	Emma Green, Head of EDI

Summary

The Barbican Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy was launched in February 2023 and is outlined on the EDI pages of the Barbican website. For previous updates, please see earlier associated papers sent to this committee, or our [EDI update pages on the Barbican website](#). This paper outlines the progress of the Strategy and associated action plans since the last update in June 2025.

We are in the latter implementation phases of the main strategy action plan, followed (in order of likely completion) by our anti-racism action plan and our access and adjustments action plan.

The Barbican continues to be on a journey of transformation and is about to enter a pivotal chapter of change with the introduction in early 2026 of a new permanent CEO, our 10 Year Plan, a new Operating Model, and substantial building Renewal activity on

the horizon. Much has been achieved, as can be seen in appendix 1 (our maturity assessment and competency framework).

We aimed to meet 29 of 35 EDI competencies in 2025 but have met 26. There are a number of key EDI competencies where progress continues to be slower than predicted (e.g. general learning and development, recruitment practices, objectives and performance, and wellbeing). This is largely due to resourcing within the PCI team.

Accordingly, the majority of the remaining incomplete competencies are related to key People and Culture processes/projects which will be resolved through the delivery of the PCI Strategy and new Operating Model throughout 2026/27 (competencies 1.3, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 4.3, 4.4 as seen in appendix 1).

Presuming the resolution of issues related to the above, and the timely delivery of Ambition 25 and the SAPphire project by the City of London Corporation (CoL), we forecast that 31 out of 35 competencies can be met by the end of 2026. The remaining competencies are then likely to be able to be met by the end of 2027.

Given the starting point of the Barbican at the beginning of this process (Levels 1 and 2 of the maturity model), it is still very positive to be in this position and a testament to the commitment of Barbican colleagues from all teams that we have achieved so much in under three years. As noted at the end of this report and in the Barbican's overall risk monitoring, Barbican EDI risk levels have decreased because of this progress (Risk Code: 'BBC Arts 023'). However, with the scale and pace of organisational transformation that is on the horizon we cannot afford to delay progress against these final and imperative EDI competencies much further (or indeed, the People and Culture projects associated with them).

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note and discuss this update.

Main Report

Key achievements (please see appendix 2 for full action tracker)

- i. **Anti-Racism line management training:** Over 130-line managers took part in the training between June and July 2025 and rated it 4.8 out of 5. 99% of staff felt the training was extremely or quite helpful for their teams with 56%

- reporting it was extremely helpful. 97% of staff reported they would recommend it to their teams.
- ii. **Anti-Racism online learning module:** This online module marks the final stage of the anti-racism learning programme and was launched in October 2025 to staff across the Barbican. This module represents a standard of anti-racism learning at the Barbican that all staff will be provided with as new starters. It will be completed within 3 months of their start date, along with being recommended to be refreshed annually to all staff.
 - iii. **Barbican Workplace Adjustments Guidance:** Developed as a practical resource to remove or minimise barriers that prevents all staff (including casual colleagues) from fully participating in the workplace. The guidance is translated from the CoL Policies relating to these areas, and outlines responsibilities and processes for requesting adjustments. It is now live on the Nest to improve visibility and build staff confidence in accessing support.
 - iv. **Pay gap reporting:** For the first time, we have been able to report on gender, disability and ethnicity pay gaps for Barbican staff. Previously, this information had only been available at a Corporation level, and we have now been able to obtain institution-specific data. This data has been analysed, and an accessible summary has been published for all staff, which includes infographics, FAQs, and recommendations agreed by Directors. See Section 1c for further information.

Progress against KPIs

1. EDI Strategy theme 1: Create equitable outcomes

- a. **KPI 1: Recruitment: demographics of applicants vs. shortlisted vs. hires:** As outlined in section 6.2, the central Corporation Management Information & Systems team will be building a central EDI dashboard for all CoL institutions and departments in 2026, which will include information on diversity within recruitment stages. Once we are able to access this, we will be able to establish baseline figures for this KPI.
- b. **KPI 2: Leavers: demographics of leavers vs. existing staff:** As outlined in the table below, 2025 figures to date show a somewhat disproportionate amount of LGBQ+ staff among leavers compared to our current staff population. There are elevated proportions of staff belonging to the Global Majority and to minoritised religions amongst leavers compared to our current staff population. The proportions of female and disabled staff among leavers in 2025 are very similar compared to our current staff population.

Characteristic	2024			2025		
	Staff (%)	Leavers (%)	Discrepancy (%)	Staff (%)	Leavers (%)	Discrepancy (%)
LGBQ+	15	25	10	15	30	15
Global Majority	16	15	-1	14	23	9
Minoritised religions	6	10	4	6	13	7
Disabled	10	14	4	11	13	2
Female	54	66	12	55	53	-2

- c. KPI 3: Size of pay gaps:** We are now able to establish baseline figures for gender, ethnicity and disability pay gaps for Barbican staff. Below is the 2024 pay gap data for the Barbican based on hourly pay rates. As per government guidance, the analysis is based on a snapshot of pay data which was taken on 31 March 2024. This includes all 635 workers paid on that date across the Barbican, including both employees and casual workers. The calculations are based on total pay, i.e. basic pay and any additional payments such as Market Forces Supplements or unsocial hours payments. The most recent dataset currently available to us is from 2024; the 2025 dataset should be made available to us in early 2026. For future years, we also hope to be able to publish data on other pay gaps, e.g. LGBTQ+ pay gaps and socio-economic background pay gaps, should we have sufficient data to do so.

Pay gap (hourly pay rates)		Barbican	CoL
Gender	Median	14.7%	0.0%
	Mean	5.1%	5.1%
Ethnicity	Median	13.0%	9.7%
	Mean	6.4%	15.2%
Disability	Median	-4.6%	0.0%
	Mean	-9.4%	6.8%

- d. KPI 4: Presence of process in which audience data and feedback is used as standard to make decisions around programming:** Across all artforms are post evaluative mechanisms including washups where audience feedback and data is discussed inconsistently. The EDI team has conducted sector-wide research to recommend key changes across artform planning and evaluation processes. These recommendations were

presented to the Barbican's Director team and will be considered in audience planning as part of the 10 Year Plan.

2. EDI Strategy theme 2: Serve a larger, more diverse audience

- a. KPI 1: Audience numbers:** Audience numbers are measured via footfall figures and ticket sales figures. Overall visitor numbers for the period April-September 2025 track well against the same period in 2024 and 2023, with increases to both Silk Street Footfall and ticket sales.

	04-09/23	04-09/24	04-09/25
Silk Street Footfall	619,890	734,296	781,754
Tickets	623,404	664,732	707,377

- b. KPI 2: Diversity of audience demographics:** Compared to our baseline figures recorded in January 2025, our figures for November 2025 are broadly similar. We have a slightly lower proportion of Global Ethnic Majority, disabled, and working-class audiences, and a slightly higher proportion of young people. However, the change is minimal. Below are some indicative benchmarks below to help contextualise our audience figures (please note the final decision on which benchmarks are to be used will be made in partnership with the Audiences working group and is yet to be made).

Target audience	Barbican audiences (Jan 2025)	Barbican audiences (Nov 2025)	Arts Council England national audiences (2022/3)	London population (Census 2021)
Global Ethnic Majority	20%	17%	10%	41%
Disabled & d/Deaf	12%	11%	10%	16%
Young People	10%	12%	7%	20%
Working class	9%	8%	unavailable	39% ¹

3. EDI Strategy theme 3: Build an inclusive culture

¹ UK national figure as per Social Mobility Commission data (2020). London-specific data is currently unavailable for this group.

- a. **KPI 1: Barbican People survey results: the percentage discrepancy between marginalised and non-marginalised staff in terms of feelings of inclusion.** 2025 People Survey results will be available from January 2026.

Discrepancy in inclusion score	2024	2025
Socio-economic background	18%	tbc
Gender	16%	tbc
Ethnicity	13%	tbc
Trans identity	12%	tbc
Disability	9%	tbc
Religion	5%	tbc
Sexual orientation	2%	tbc
Average	11%	tbc

Priority action plan areas in detail

4. Inclusive Leadership and Line Management

1. **Diversity network leadership, including network chairs and executive sponsors:** All co-chairs and executive sponsors of our five diversity networks are nearing the end of a year-long leadership development coaching programme delivered by Huma Qazi consultancy. The programme consists of both individual and group sessions designed to better understand and engage with the scope of their network roles (e.g. their own leadership style and how chairs might guide, inspire and collaborate enabling change for their members and the organisation. The EDI team continues to support the co-chairs and executive sponsors of the networks, meeting with them monthly to provide advice and guidance.
2. **Anti-Racism Line Management Training:** The EDI Team worked in partnership with Hustle Crew to deliver anti-racism line management training to over 130 line managers as part of the anti-racism learning programme. Staff rating this training 4.8 out of 5, while also reporting 97% of staff would recommend the training to their colleagues. The final stage of this learning programme is now in place in the form of an online learning module for new starters, and as an annual refresher for current staff.

5. Empowered and Collaborative Teams

1. **EDI Forum:** The EDI Forum continues to be a place for teams across the Barbican to share best practice and updates. All attendees are welcome to add their own topics and learnings to the agenda. Some recent key discussion items include:
 - Anti-Racism Working Group and Online Training Module
 - Reasonable Adjustments Guidance
 - Online Visual Stories and Communication Cards Implementation
 - Access Desk in our Front of House
 - Updates to our Zero Tolerance Platform
 - The 2025 Barbican People Survey
2. **Staff diversity networks:** Our five staff diversity networks continue to be active in their role helping the Barbican deliver on our commitment to EDI. As outlined in the table below, the networks meet regularly, hold a variety of events, and create spaces for staff with marginalised and minoritised identities to come together.

Diversity network	Current membership (± Jan 2025)	Key activities over past 6 months
Barbican Parents, Carers & Guardians	59 (+22)	• Carers Week event Massage and Meditation • Parents, Carers & Guardians Holi'DAY' Lunch • Carers Anonymous sessions • Family Film Club screening & picnic
Barbican Women	145 (+20)	• Welcomed 3 new members of the committee • Hosted monthly coffee mornings and drinks evenings for staff • Organised a 'Demystifying Menopause' workshop for staff for menopause awareness month • Continued project planning for International Women's Day in 2026 • Improved resource lists for staff on The Nest staff network pages
Barbican Global Majority	86 (+11)	• Black History Month programme to celebrate the year's official theme of 'Standing Firm in Power and Pride'. To mark the month, the Global Majority Network curated a programme they hope will forge a deeper understanding and appreciation of Black art and culture and bring everyone closer together. Events

		included a curator tour, theatre tickets, performances at Milton Court and more.
Barbican Disability	49 (+9)	- Continued support and advocacy for staff members - Continued contributions to Barbican Renewal, EDI Forum, and Access and Adjustments Action Plan groups - Hosted social events and drop-in sessions - Collaborated with DAWN on plans for Purple Tuesday and Disability History Month - Full Disability History Month programme commencing with a launch breakfast for all staff
Barbican Pride	75 (+3)	- Lakeside flag raising ceremony - Cross-city LGBTQIA+ networks event with Bishopsgate - Quarterly network drinks & social - Monthly coffee mornings - Feel the Sound exhibition tour - Network trips and tickets to: Queer 70s Cinema, Classical Pride, and Lenny

6. Data and Analytics

1. **Barbican People Survey:** The EDI team continue to work with individual departments on their People Survey Inclusion Action Plans, which were developed following the first Barbican People Survey in Autumn 2024. An EDI Business Partner has been assigned to each of the 20 teams to help them monitor and achieve the inclusion goals set out in their action plans. Engagement levels have varied across departments, but many departments established detailed action plans which they have made good progress against over the course of the past year. Goals have varied across departments and include actions such as: improving the inclusivity of recruitment processes to increase the proportion of women in the department, increasing levels of engagement in EDI training, improving feedback processes, increasing awareness of adjustments, holding EDI slots in team meetings. We intend to follow a similar process following the 2025 survey, which runs from 17 November to 7 December. Results are expected in January 2026 and will be compared to our baseline data from 2024 to create a picture of which teams are improving and which are not.
2. **Staff EDI data dashboard:** We continue to work with the central Corporation Management Information and Systems team on building a dashboard visualising Barbican staff diversity data. There have, however, been significant

delays in this work due to capacity challenges in the central Corporation HR team. Going forward, efforts will be focussed on building a central EDI dashboard for all departments and institutions of the CoL. The team will use the Barbican EDI dashboard as a foundation for this work, and the Barbican EDI team have worked with the central Corporation EEDI team to develop a detailed specification for the central EDI dashboard, which will be built in 2026. The specification includes data on: current staff diversity profile; diversity within salary bands; diversity within length of service; diversity of starters and leavers, benchmarking data; response rates; diversity within recruitment; trends over time. See Appendix 6 for snapshots of the current Barbican EDI dashboard (benchmarking data is not included in this appendix due to lack of dashboard capability, but please refer to Appendix 8 for benchmarking data). This will be integrated into the main dashboard in due course.

3. **Audience dashboard:** The audience dashboard – which visualises various pieces of data on ticketed audiences, including key diversity measures and general feedback - has undergone major improvement works in the past year. This work has been delayed due to resourcing issues in the Barbican's Marketing and Business Systems & Data teams. Recent work has focussed on significant improvements to the back-end infrastructure, specifically a switch to a superior data platform, Databricks. This resulted in improvements to how the data is structured and received, which will ultimately enhance dashboard performance. The audience dashboard has needed to be re-built on top of the new data platform and is now almost complete. Snapshots of the latest version can be found in Appendix 7 (please note that benchmarking data is not included in this version but will be integrated in the coming month – relevant benchmarks can be found in Appendix 8).

7. A Strategic Approach to Audiences

1. **Audience zero tolerance working group:** This is a cross-organisational working group with colleagues from the audience delivery, EDI, and HR teams. This working group was created from staff feedback given in the anti-racism training sessions and by front of house managers. This working group has created guidance for Zero Tolerance instances that occur with visitors across the Centre. The guidance acts as a resource for line managers to reinforce expectations around managing Zero Tolerance instances and distinguishing between inappropriate behaviour and difficult customer behaviour.
2. **EDI Checklist for Visual Arts and other artforms:** The EDI team has developed an EDI Checklist in collaboration with the Visual Arts team to embed better EDI provisions in their exhibition planning processes. This checklist covers key areas including socio-political themes, reputational risk, accessible

physical space and inclusive language. With this checklist we have imbedded better EDI provisions for audiences and artists throughout the planning process, allowing the EDI team to respond effectively to EDI risk. This checklist is now being implemented across Visual Arts exhibition planning and is being extended and adapted to meet the needs of other artforms.

3. **Access and Adjustments – Audience Actions:** The Audience Subgroup has continued its focus on improving the access customer journey, with particular attention to both pre-arrival experience and on-site support. Members of the subgroup have been exploring how we can better communicate access information before a visit, ensuring that customers feel informed and confident about what to expect. This includes reviewing the clarity, visibility, and relevance of access details provided on our website and in booking communications. In October 2025, we piloted a dedicated access desk at the Black British Book Festival enabling staff to provide personalised, face-to-face support to audience members with access requirements. The desk also allowed staff to respond in real time, reducing barriers and improving the overall experience for audiences. The initiative was well received, with many attendees returning throughout the day to express their appreciation. One member of the Audience Experience team shared:
“Throughout the day, many attendees returned to express their gratitude to the Barbican for ensuring they could fully access the festival. Several described it as the best access support they had ever received from a large arts institution.”
The EDI team and Audience Experience team will continue working together to ensure access desk provision becomes a permanent feature at future events.

8. Informing the People Agenda

1. **Access and Adjustments Action Plan:** Over the past six months, cross-functional subgroups have continued to progress the action plan.
The Attitudinal Subgroup developed and launched the Barbican Workplace Adjustments Guidance in response to 2024 staff survey findings, which revealed that 60% of respondents were unaware of where to find relevant information. The guidance clarifies responsibilities across HR, EDI, Health & Safety, and line managers, and provides step-by-step support for all staff, including casual colleagues. Written in accessible language and clearly signposted on the Nest (the Barbican’s intranet), initial feedback from staff suggests that this is already having a positive impact on their confidence and awareness, we will check these findings against the next staff survey.
The Tech Subgroup delivered a Meeting Room Accessibility Audit, now live on the Nest, to address immediate barriers in shared spaces. With increased office attendance and limited accessible rooms, the audit provides practical,

room-specific information on physical and digital accessibility. It supports inclusive working practices and reinforces the importance of hybrid meetings, particularly for disabled and neurodivergent colleagues. This work complements longer-term goals to improve staff spaces under the Barbican Renewal programme.

2. **Report and support:** The zero-tolerance reporting system, 'Report and Support', continues to be actively used by staff, including casual colleagues, to report zero tolerance issues. In 2025 thus far, there have been a total of 30 reports, compared to 20 in 2024 (although the system was launched in May 2024). See Appendix 7 for a full overview of incidents reported.

Our report and support working group, consisting of representatives from the EDI, HR, Audience Experience and Retail teams, has made great progress over the past six months. The group has sought to streamline the reporting process and to make the platform more accessible to both employees and casuals. We are now coming to the end of the project, which has involved making changes to the website, the questionnaire, terminology used to describe the system, the way the system is advertised to staff, introducing a process map to increase transparency, and changes to how reports are allocated to case managers.

3. **People policies:** The EDI team continue to work with the CoL HR Policy Manager to feed into the Corporation people policy review. We are awaiting the next batch of revised policies from the central Corporation so that we, alongside HR and our staff diversity networks, can provide feedback as appropriate. The EDI team are also involved in the Corporation-wide Gender Identity Policy working group to establish next steps regarding the recently withdrawn Gender Identity Policy. We attend regular working group meetings and contribute towards policy contents and strategy.

2. **Mental health and wellbeing:** The EDI Team continues to support the implementation of mental health and wellbeing practices across the Centre. The renewal of Headspace Membership has been greatly appreciated by staff. We currently have 249 actively enrolled members, with over 233,228 minutes of mediation listened to this year. 40% of active users are engaging with 'Letting Go of Stress' course – our most popular course month on month. We recently did a Headspace deep dive via The Bulletin (weekly internal newsletter) and The Nest with many hands-on resources for all levels of staff. The Communications team and Mental Health First Aiders across the Barbican have delivered all-staff comms about the importance of talking about mental health, support, resources and how to sign up to become a MHFA at work.

3. Learning and Development

1. **Line Management Anti-Racism Training:** Following all-staff anti-racism training, the EDI team delivered line management training to over 130 line managers (out of approximately 150 line managers at the Barbican). We monitored feedback through surveys pre and post training sessions, our KPIs included two key measurements:
 - i. Line manager confidence in creating safe environment to talk about race and racism
 - ii. Line manager confidence in role modelling anti-racism behaviour within their teams

These KPIs were defined in line with the learning outcomes of these training sessions and the insights gained within the anti-racism workshops with global majority staff. The growth in confidence to create safe environments and to role model anti-racist behaviours is listed below:

KPIs	Pre-workshop survey 2024/2025	Post workshop data 2025/2025
Confidence creating safe environment	Very confident – 10%	Very confident – 43%
	Quite confident – 76%	Quite confident – 53%
	Not very confident – 13%	Not very confident – 0%
	Not at all confident – 0%	Not at all confident – 0%
Role-modelling anti-racist behaviour	Very Confident – 13%	Very Confident – 36%
	Quite confident – 71%	Quite Confident – 61%
	Not very confident – 14%	Not very confident – 1%
	Not at all confident – 0%	Not at all confident – 0%

In addition to these KPIs, line managers rated the training 4.8 out of 5 and more importantly 99% of staff felt it was extremely or quite helpful for their teams, with 56% reporting it was extremely helpful. Finally, 97% said they would recommend the training to their colleagues. Other feedback from line managers included:

- *‘The scenarios were extremely generative. They revealed how important it is to accept that challenging racism will feel uncomfortable and how it is important to sit with this and feel confident to persist in challenging discrimination.’*
- *‘Great session, thank you. Really insightful and felt like a real safe space. Abadesi was a very engaging, empathetic and supportive trainer.’*

- *‘Everyone dreads a roleplay situation, but it was handled really nicely and genuinely showed something beyond what a discussion would.’*
- *‘The roleplaying was good for getting the whole group working together and diving into the real-world nuance of some of the scenarios.’*
- *‘Facilitator was super knowledgeable and patient. Case studies were relevant and important, thank you for pushing us out of our comfort zone!’*

2. **Anti-Racism e-Learning Module:** The final component of the anti-racism learning programme is the e-learning module (including quizzes and scenario-based learning) available to all staff and new starters on the CoL learning and development platform. This module was designed by EDI team and Hustle Crew as an online version of the all-staff training session which was delivered to approximately 450 staff across 2024 and 2025. The online module is split into two parts:

- i. Module 1: Setting the Scene: Systemic Issues, Establishing a Shared Understanding of Racism and Anti-Racism and Zero Tolerance Statement
- ii. Module 2: Scenario-based learning, Anti-Racism Leadership Framework and Space 2 Model for Mindful inclusion

This online module went live in October 2025 and all new starters will be required to enroll on this module within the first three months of joining the Barbican. It will also be recommended to all staff to annually redo module 2 to practice scenarios.

3. **Cultural Intelligence:** In October 2025, the EDI team participated in two half-day Cultural Intelligence (CQ) workshops, facilitated by an accredited CQ trainer. This was organised by the central Corporation EEDI team and was an opportunity to come together to increase our knowledge of CQ. The training consisted of a comprehensive psychometric test to determine our current CQ levels and then provided us with an opportunity to reflect on our values and behaviours in relation to CQ. We then discussed different aspects of CQ (drive, strategy, action, knowledge) and made individual action plans for improving our levels of CQ in each area. The team will embed their learnings in their day-to-day work to facilitate communication and collaboration with staff across the Barbican.

4. **Theory of Change:** In July 2025, the EDI team participated in two half-day workshops about Theory of Change, facilitated by an external expert in Evaluation. This was organised by the central Corporation EEDI team and was an opportunity to come together to increase our understanding of Theory of Change. The training consisted of learning the basic principles of Theory of Change and identifying situations to which this could be applied. We then developed our own theories of change for EDI initiatives we are working on, to help us map out the aims, inputs, outputs and desired outcomes. The team

will embed their learnings in their day-to-day work with teams across the Barbican to facilitate action planning.

5. **Menopause training:** In October 2025 for World Menopause Day, the Barbican Women's Network organised menopause training for staff at the Barbican, facilitated by a certified Menopause and Health Behaviour Change Coach. The training unpacked the science behind menopause, and the steps one can take to ensure a smoother transition - no matter their age. It explored the biological changes that occur during menopause as well as the broader context: how socio-economic factors and societal expectations shape each individual's experience of this transition. By understanding these influences, staff were able to better prepare themselves for this stage of life and help to reduce the stigma that surrounds it.

Next steps

As outlined at the beginning of this report, if the key barriers to progress against the PCI Strategy can be resolved in a timely manner, the action areas under the EDI Strategy will be meaningfully embedded into a broader framework for transformation which will connect directly to the new Operating Model. We are hopeful this could enable us to address some of the most significant core issues which technically sit beyond the scope of the EDI Strategy but are essential both to building EDI maturity, and to the success of the Barbican and its long-term plans as a whole. These include:

- i. Organisational capability in data and insights
- ii. Intra-organisational autonomy/delegated responsibilities related to the sharing and analysis of people data
- iii. A learning culture
- iv. Integration of OD, EDI and HR practices
- v. Prioritisation of line management responsibilities and 'self-service'
- vi. Leadership and management development
- vii. Collaboration between departments and embracing cross-Barbican working practices which enable strategic delivery
- viii. Consistent, timely and effective planning and evaluation practice
- ix. Ethical decision-making competency
- x. Emphasis on 'audience centred' and 'people centred' programming and decision making across artforms and functions

Conclusion

The Barbican's EDI Strategy has delivered significant progress since its launch in 2023, moving the organisation from early stages of maturity toward a more inclusive and equitable culture. While 26 of 35 competencies have been achieved, remaining gaps

largely relate to People and Culture processes that will be addressed through the PCI Strategy and new Operating Model in 2026–27. With strong foundations in place, reduced EDI risk levels, and continued commitment across teams, the Barbican is well-positioned to meet its remaining objectives and embed lasting change. However, given the scale of upcoming organisational transformation, maintaining momentum and prioritising these final competencies will be critical to sustaining progress and achieving full maturity by 2027.

Corporate and strategic implications

Strategic implications

The Barbican EDI strategy aligns with the City of London Corporate Plan. It is broadly accepted that more diverse, inclusive organisations bring multiple benefits for both the organisation itself and wider society. Ensuring that we deliver our EDI Strategy directly supports the success of the Barbican Purpose, Values and associated strategies including the Strategic Framework, Creative Vision and Audience Strategy.

Financial implications

Successful delivery of the EDI strategy should result in financial benefits in terms of long-term relevance and audience development, enhanced enterprise opportunities, stronger reputation and higher staff engagement leading to reduced turnover, longer retention and increased motivation and performance levels.

Resource implications

Broadly this strategy requires a commitment by all staff to embed EDI into their work, which by its nature impacts the prioritisation of resource.

Legal implications

There are legal implications for us if this work is not undertaken or fails. We could be subject to tribunal and/or challenges under the Equality Act (2010).

Risk implications

The main EDI risk area for the Barbican has recently decreased following a review, as a result of the progress outlined in this report against the maturity model. For reference, risk code 'BBC Arts 023: Failure to build EDI maturity'.

Equalities implications

The EDI strategy and associated action plans are designed in partnership with people across a full spectrum of experiences including those with lived experience of oppression, our Diversity Networks and key stakeholders, and takes into account the engagement and feedback of over half of the Barbican staff population, plus several commissioned reports and expert advice. The EDI strategy, intended to create equity for all, should result in everyone,

and particularly marginalised staff, seeing an overall improvement in their experience of the Barbican. The work should benefit people regardless of their protected characteristics, including those from lower socio-economic backgrounds and will have positive impacts for intersectional issues.

Climate implications

None

Security implications

None

Appendices (Non-Public)

- Appendix 1 – EDI Maturity Assessment update December 2025
- Appendix 2 – EDI Strategy Action Plan Tracker
- Appendix 3 – Access and Adjustments Action Plan Tracker
- Appendix 4 – Anti-Racism Line Management Training
- Appendix 5 – Audience Dashboard
- Appendix 6 – Staff EDI Dashboard
- Appendix 7 – Report and Support Statistics
- Appendix 8 – Diversity Benchmarking Data