

# Equality Outcomes 2021-2025

## Summary of consultation (December 2020)

### Executive summary

The [Equality Act 2010](#) requires all public bodies to publish equality outcomes at least every four years. Working in partnership - Edinburgh, West Lothian and Midlothian Councils (including their education authorities and Midlothian's licensing board), NHS Lothian, Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership and East Lothian Integrated Joint Board developed a set of draft equality themes and outcomes for consultation. These were based on research and evidence from different sources and on conversations with services and organisations that help and support people.

The consultation was open from 3 November to 22 December 2020, welcoming feedback from people with a variety of life and personal experiences on the draft equality themes and outcomes. In total, 255 responses were submitted to the online survey.

- The majority of respondents agreed that the equality themes identified were important to address. However, they felt further work was needed to make the outcomes and supporting actions more specific and measurable.
- While respondents recognised that resources must be focused where they are most needed, they found it difficult to prioritise the themes as there were linkages between them all.
- Accessibility must address digital inclusion, communication and the physical environment. It was felt that the theme does not adequately tackle the overall lack of public toilet provision and that the lack of facilities affects everyone.
- More support is needed for vulnerable people during the pandemic due to the impact on employment and people's affordability.
- Concerns were raised in general about the lack of affordable, social housing available and the impact this has on different protected characteristic groups. Houses should be designed to facilitate independent living and a "home for life." Access to support networks, families and the local community is vital to prevent isolation.
- Homelessness must be addressed within the housing theme, with proactive action taken. For some people managing a tenancy may be difficult, and alternative housing solutions should be available.
- More funding and resources are needed to make significant change and progress in Education. There are not enough special education needs places or staff in special schools, a lack of aspiration and choice for young people with learning disabilities, inconsistencies in ICT provision for pupils across schools. Bullying must be tackled not only through training but a culture-shift in attitudes and the curriculum should include more teaching about different cultures, beliefs and identity to increase awareness and acceptance.
- Some respondents felt that the theme of eradicating racism focused heavily on BAME and that more consideration was needed with regards to all ethnicities and the discrimination faced. The past should be acknowledged and learnt from.
- The focus of safer communities and gender-based violence was felt to be too narrow, and must acknowledge that men can be victims of violence too. Better consideration of the

discrimination and violence against people with disabilities, migrants, people in same-sex relationships would also be welcomed.

- Creating better pathways for disadvantaged groups to access employment, changes in recruitment processes and providing training for all recruiting managers on equalities and unconscious bias can address the barriers people face in accessing employment opportunities.
- Mental health awareness, support and management requires significant additional resource and budget, Access to support must be easy to access and readily available. Some respondents were concerned that a focus on self-management may discriminate against people unable to recognise they need help or support.
- Some respondents felt that there appeared to be a strong bias towards equality issues faced by trans people and questioned how equality of access for all could be ensured if such a strong bias existed towards one area.

## Background

This report provides a summary of the feedback received as part of a consultation conducted by Edinburgh, West Lothian and Midlothian Councils (including their education authorities and Midlothian’s licensing board), NHS Lothian, Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership and East Lothian Integrated Joint Board, from 3 November to 22 December 2020, on a draft set of equality themes and outcomes.

## Overview

In April 2021, all public bodies are required to publish their new Equality, Diversity and Rights Framework for 2021-2025, including a set of equality outcomes. Equality outcomes should set out how a public body intends to meet its public sector duties to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. They should also set out how the public body plans to make a difference for citizens, specifically those who share protected characteristics, to bring practical improvements in their life chances.

Working in partnership - Edinburgh, West Lothian and Midlothian Councils (including their education authorities and Midlothian’s licensing board), NHS Lothian, Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership and East Lothian Integrated Joint Board developed a set of draft equality themes and outcomes for consultation based on evidence from across service areas, research and previous engagement with stakeholders.

## Consultation activity and response

Extended social distancing measures due to the current pandemic meant that consultation and engagement activity was primarily facilitated online. The online consultation was open from 3 November to 22 December 2020. Overall, 255 responses were submitted to the online consultation.

Responding as...		Response by area	
An individual	92%	City of Edinburgh	70%
Public body, organisation or charity	4%	East Lothian	18%
Private business	0%	Midlothian	18%
Community group	1%	West Lothian	14%
Other (please specify):	2%		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Red Cross office in Midlothian</li> <li>• Student Social Worker</li> <li>• As a support worker with homeless young people</li> <li>• School Pupil Voice Group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A consultant on equality and human rights</li> <li>• Collective advocacy group</li> <li>• As a member of the Scottish Youth Parliament</li> <li>• West Lothian Race Forum</li> <li>• West Lothian Faith Forum</li> </ul>
<i>Organisation name:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leith Community Archers</li> <li>• Keycomm</li> <li>• Active Schools</li> <li>• DTCC</li> <li>• Circle</li> <li>• Rock Trust (5 responses submitted)</li> <li>• Flat</li> <li>• Access for All</li> <li>• Midlothian Community Safety and Justice Partnership</li> <li>• Ross High School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality Here Now</li> <li>• Musselburgh and Inveresk Community Council</li> <li>• CAPS Independent Advocacy</li> <li>• East Lothian, West Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Committee (includes VAWG Delivery subgroup)</li> <li>• People First (Scotland) - Midlothian</li> <li>• Strengthening Communities for Race Equality Scotland - SCOREscotland</li> <li>• Women's Aid</li> </ul>

The online consultation was available in various languages and format via the Recite Me function on the West Lothian website. To complement the online consultation, the following were also available:

- Paper consultation document available on request
- Interpretation and translation services
- BSL videos
- Group discussions with upper-primary pupils from Edinburgh schools
- Young person survey

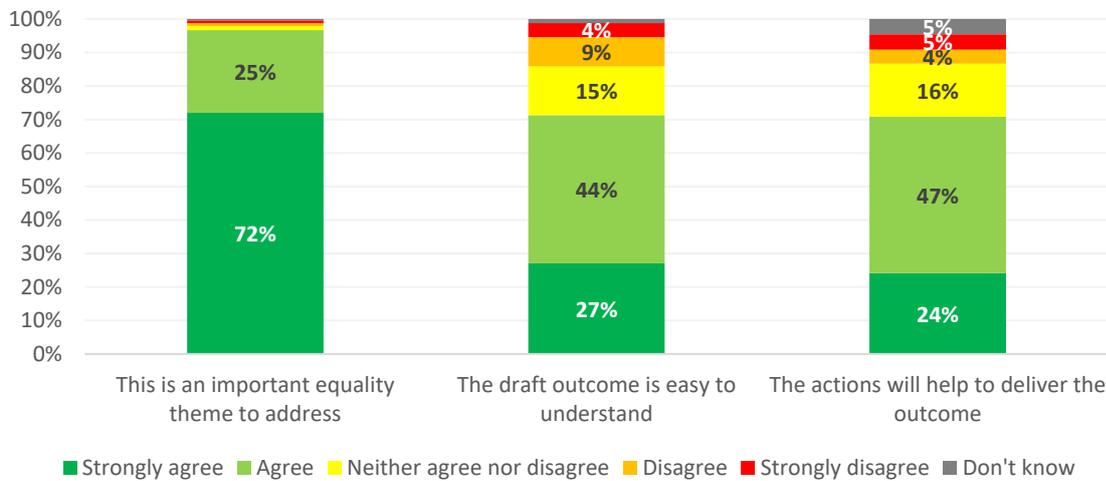
To promote the consultation and encourage response several measures were used, including:

- Staff groups / networks were asked to raise awareness or feedback views of their service users where they could.
- The Partner Equality Officer Group (PEOG) worked with community and representative organisations to raise awareness of the consultation and asked them to feedback views on behalf of their community.
- The PEOG facilitated conversations with services and partners asking for feedback on the draft outcomes and any implications for service delivery and protected characteristic groups.
- Social media posts from all partners promoted the consultation and encouraged people to share their views.

## General comments on the equality themes

In general, respondents felt that the draft outcomes and supporting actions needed to be more specific and measurable. It was felt that the wording of some of the outcomes was too complex and could be clearer and more concise. Further detail on specifics is provided in appendix 1.

## Equality theme 1: Accessibility



### Feedback on draft outcome and actions

Documents and communication should be provided in accessible formats by default. Plain English should be used, avoid jargon and business speak to ensure it is easy for everyone to understand. We should not only think about the language we use to communicate but also how to deliver the message by considering the use of symbols, images etc. It was suggested that communications could be tested by a panel of service users or by representatives for protected characteristic groups.

*Many young people I work with are homeless and there is not appropriate housing for them, they have often stated they often do not understand all the information given to them, due to covid it is very difficult as usually I would support them to any homeless assessment but I am often unable to do this now due to the pandemic.*

Regarding digital exclusion, it was highlighted that current ICT availability in Edinburgh schools varies. Personal devices cannot be used as they may compromise the school ICT network. Charities are more likely to give devices to families, rather than schools – which means the issue cannot be addressed. Perhaps by explaining the situation to charities, it would allow schools access to donations.

People in abusive relationships may have limited IT access or usage monitored. Gypsy/Traveller community members tend not to have internet access or equipment, may not use social media and may experience literacy issues. It is important that consideration is given to how these groups are communicated with to ensure any equality outcomes and supporting actions deliver benefits for them.

Some people may not be able to afford digital devices which increases the digital divide. Locations such as libraries, offices, job centres, community centres could be used to facilitate digital learning, provide facilities etc. The development of these skills will be beneficial and support people longer term. The IT Buddies scheme run by the West Lothian Council Advice Shop was highlighted as a model that could be adopted further.

In addition to computer classes, basic-education classes could be provided for non-English speakers to help build skills and confidence. Staff should also be provided training to feel confident about using inclusive language, sign language and lip reading.

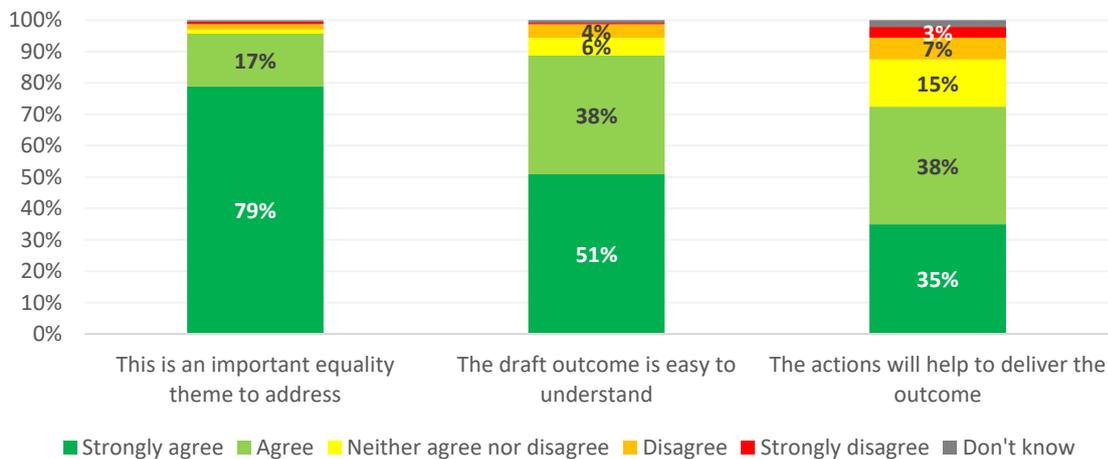
The physical environment and infrastructure need to be addressed. Respondents noted that Edinburgh can be difficult to navigate due to street clutter, poor street signage, road and pavement conditions, especially for people with disabilities. Improvements are required to support physical access. It was felt that there was a lack of disabled parking and proper enforcement.

*As someone who is disabled, I am excluded by both my council and health board to basic facilities that able-bodied people take for granted. For example, there is no disabled drop off point from Chalmers hospital... The Western General has the majority of the disabled bays in unprotected parking ... At the RIE, the disabled bays are too far from the main building, there is little available in the form of wheelchair... Edinburgh Council has a woeful lack of disabled bays in the city centre... does not factor into account the need for greater space required to open doors, and boots to get wheelchair and walking aids out.*

It was felt that the actions did not address the overall lack of public toilet provision adequately. Covid-19 and lockdown has highlighted the lack of public toilet facilities available. Access to public toilets is important to allow people, especially those with disabilities or older people, to maintain a quality of life. Stand-alone toilets would “serve single parents with children, non-binary people, people with mental health conditions offering privacy.” Only having disabled toilets available has increased demand on these facilities and caused accessibility issues for disabled people. Proposed solutions included cheap public toilet charges, working in partnership with local businesses by offering incentives and providing signage in shop/café windows communicating access.

While toilets should be provided for trans people, it should not be at the expense of women, girls and people with disabilities who also deserve privacy, dignity and safety. It was highlighted that while sex and disability are protected characteristics, gender identity is not.

## Equality theme 2: Housing



## Feedback on draft outcome and actions

Covid-19 has had an impact on employment and people’s ability to afford housing. More support is needed for vulnerable people during this time. However, concerns were raised in general about the lack of affordable, social housing available and the amount of student accommodation, hotel and expensive housing being built in Edinburgh.

*Even homeless young people who have silver priority status are often waiting 18months to receive an offer of a council house.*

Private rents are too expensive which can make it hard for people to manage financially. Mid-market rent excludes those on low pay or benefit, while private landlords are more likely to choose tenants in secure employment.

Housing developers should be required to include a greater percentage of social and affordable housing within developments and land costs should be reduced to entice more building / housing stock.

Housing needs to be maintainable and economical to run. Those who are vulnerable may be unable to afford the fuel and running costs of their homes. In addition, proactive work is needed to ensure BAME families are aware of the benefits they are entitled to.

*The current housing supply excludes new Scots who are subject to no recourse to public funds. These migrants are in work but are often unable to access affordable housing due to their immigration status... an early intervention model is needed that provides a fair and urgent way to access affordable housing to keep migrants out of poverty.*

One respondent highlighted that for some Gypsy/Travellers they may “feel forced into housing because they care for a family member with disabilities/illnesses and only get the support needed if in one locality.” In addition, a lack of understanding of their culture can cause issues with neighbours in housing developments or prevent the overall provision of appropriately serviced, habitable permanent sites.

Inclusive design should be the core of new developments, with adaptations to existing homes that facilitate independent living and a home for life. The focus must be on good quality building with appropriate materials that reduce the need for ongoing maintenance and repair. Legislation change is required to make landlords more accountable for the safety of privately let properties. It was suggested that safety should be included as part of the outcome:

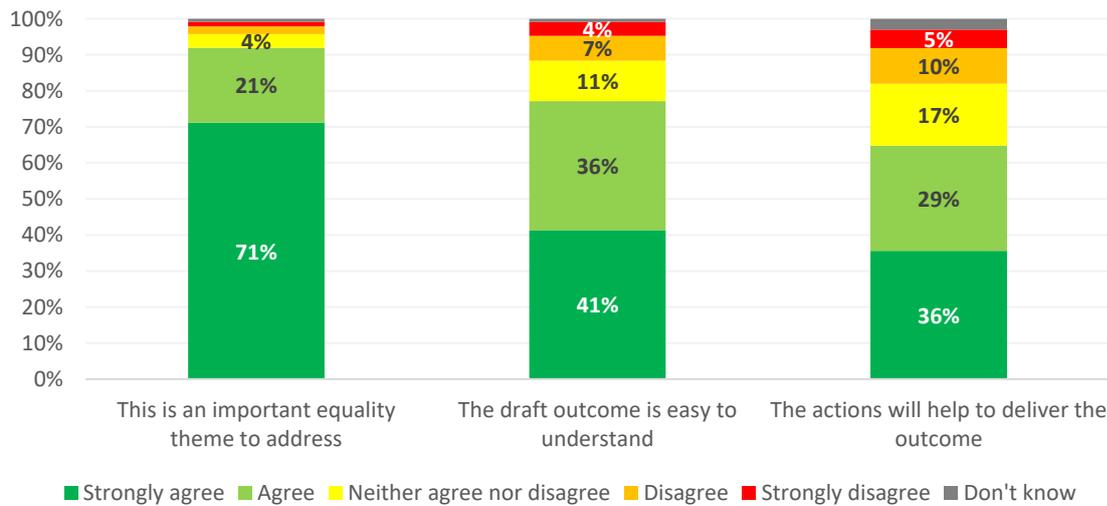
*People have access to a home that is safe, warm, affordable, accessible and that meets their needs.*

Location of accessible and affordable housing is important too. Respondents highlighted that access to support networks, families and the local community is vital to prevent isolation. Access to these networks, neighbourhood features and facilities is desirable and encourages people to want to live in an area. The Midlothian local housing strategy was given as an example that highlights successful work being carried out to ensure a house meets the needs of an individual.

The reasons for homelessness must be addressed within this theme, with proactive action taken. It was recognised that for some people managing a tenancy may be difficult, and that alternatives should be available. Well managed long-term options such as shared, supported accommodation should be provided for vulnerable people, such as homeless people, ex-offenders, people with disabilities or mental health conditions or those in care. Young adults in the care system should be included in homeless prevention strategies, with better transitions put in place. Consideration should be given to how the work of organisations such as Bethany Christian Trust in Edinburgh could be adapted for the wider Lothian area.

Some respondents also wondered how the recently published Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) regulations would be addressed as part of this theme. The expectation is that “landlords must collect data relating to each of the protected characteristics for their existing tenants, new tenants, people on waiting lists, governing body members and staff. Local authorities must also collect data on protected characteristics for people who apply to them as homeless.” Respondents highlighted the importance that services understand the appropriate language and terminology to use, acknowledge their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and reduce barriers to include protected characteristic groups in service and policy development.

### Equality theme 3: Inclusive education



### Feedback on draft outcome and actions

Overall, respondents felt that more funding and resources were necessary to deliver this outcome.

There are not enough special education needs (SEN) places or staff in special schools, which results in children often being retained in mainstream education, which can affect that individual child and also other pupils within the same classroom.

*Children with special needs deserve to be educated in their own way as do children without special needs. A high school for children with special needs is badly needed in West Lothian, forget Cedarbank and separate units in the high schools, these children need to be educated in their own school joining in with the odd mainstream class, out of class activity or trip.*

Provision should be made for children who can't access school due to barriers such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or mental health conditions. Removing barriers to participation, offering home tuition options or outreach workers would help ensure students receive an appropriate education.

Some respondents felt that there is currently a lack of aspiration and choice for young people with learning disabilities, with no formal career guidance or support after initial placement provided.

In addition, some respondents felt that a lack of consideration had been given to adult learning or neuro-diverse learning for adults. One respondent highlighted the difficulties experienced as a disabled adult trying to access adult education and support. It should also be noted that some young people attend further education institutions, not just secondary schools.

More funding should be ring-fenced to acknowledge the increase in demand for English as an additional language support.

Digital exclusion was raised as an issue at schools with personal devices not allowed, reports of booklists not being sent home because all pupils haven't been given access to them. Questions were asked about our ability to reduce the attainment gap, when schools in poorer areas may not be able to provide their students with similar resources that wealthier counterparts enjoy. In addition, consideration of "top-of-the-class" pupils is needed to ensure they have access to advanced education material and an environment conducive to further development and learning. In addition, consideration is required for pupils learning opportunities outside of school.

*Many schools are fantastic when it comes to working with homeless young people, but many have stated they feel discriminated against as they find it more difficult to do their homework due to lack of space and resources. Many cannot afford to get to school due to low income and a free bus pass would really benefit them, so they do not need to choose between food, clothing, heat or school.*

Improvements in tackling bullying, along with educating children about better attitudes towards differences of all kinds, will support children’s development, mental health and wellbeing. Availability of counselling should be improved, including in primary settings. Better support could be offered to children and young people from separated families, as well as to their parents who are navigating new family dynamics and relationships. It was also felt that there is a lack of policy that protects LGBT students who come from backgrounds where such topics may be taboo.

Investment must be made in the provision of training for teachers to feel confident tackling these situations. However, to deal with bullying effectively respondents felt that a shift in culture was also required to empower teachers and children to report and take action.

*Some people have experienced racism at other schools, and don’t feel it was dealt with well. When racism was highlighted to teachers, it wasn’t always followed through.*

Greater visibility of under-represented groups in school leadership, especially amongst guidance teachers and speech and language therapists would be welcomed.

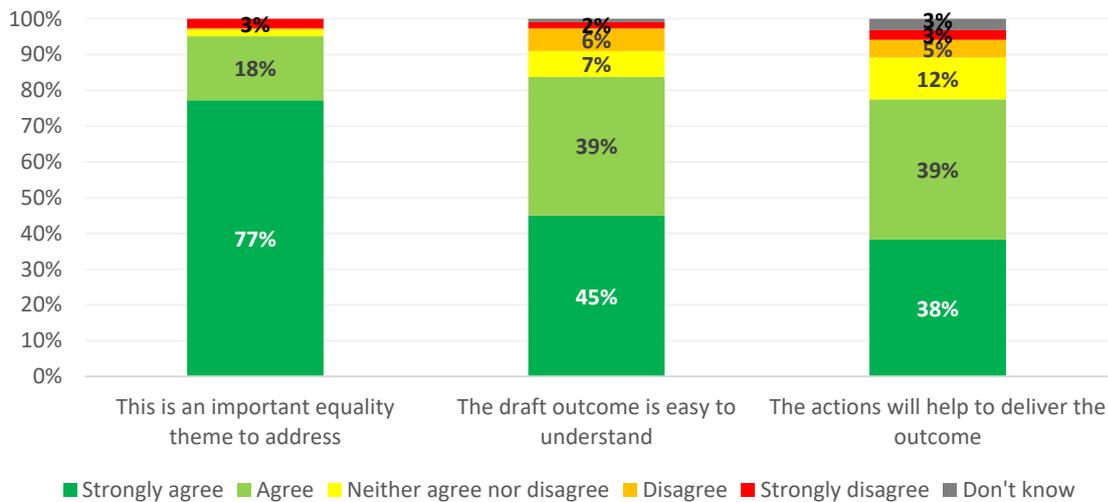
Funding should be provided for schools to complete the LGBT Charter provided by LGBT Scotland. Equality and diversity should be taught in sexual education and throughout primary and secondary schools.

Some respondents raised concerns about the focus on providing support to transgender children and young people, over other issues such as disability. It was felt that any support offered must be qualified, given that research shows young trans-identified people may later realise they are in fact simply gender non-conforming and/or gay. In addition, it was asked what support would be provided for gender non-conforming young people or other vulnerable groups.

Guidelines for inclusive education should ensure that girls rights to privacy and dignity and safety are considered. Respondents raised concerns that sexual harassment in secondary schools requires greater focus to ensure it is recognised and dealt with more effectively. It was felt that girls require access to single sex toilets and single sex accommodation in order to feel and be safe.

Consideration of religious minority children must be made as well as the above. There was no mention of children and young people of armed forces and the additional resources required (evidence based) for numeracy and literacy, mental health etc. For Gypsy/Traveller young people, there is nothing in the curriculum that positively represents their ways of life, educates others on the differences in culture and beliefs. In addition, consideration is also needed of why working-class white boys tend to have poorer education outcomes compared to girls etc. The focus should be on children that are disadvantaged, whatever the reason.

## Equality theme 4: Eradicate racism



### Feedback on draft outcome and actions

*We have seen racist incidents in the community – e.g. the park and we don't always know what to do, how to help without making things worse.*

Prioritising education is important in tackling this issue. Empathy workshops and training for young people, teachers, public sector employees and ensuring that schools address issues faced by real people, today would be welcomed. However, the focus should not only be on race but on all types of discrimination and the damage that colonialism can cause. Some respondents felt that the theme of eradicating racism focused heavily on BAME and that more consideration was needed with regards to all ethnicities and the discrimination faced.

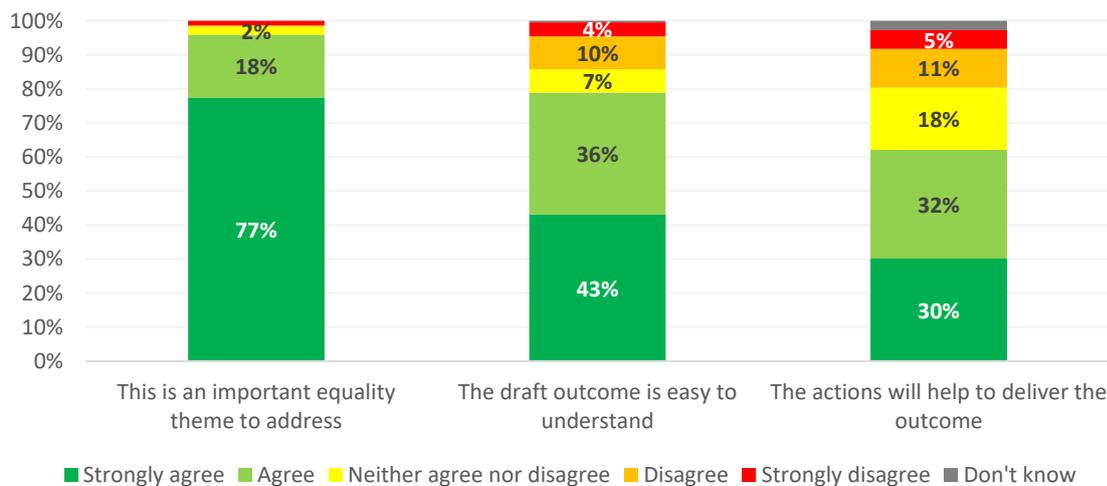
*From my experience it follows that, unfortunately, the Polish community is unfortunately a target of many Scottish residents. I am sorry to say that I have met with frequent harassment not necessarily from adults but children who are overwhelmed with the conviction that "Poles are taking their jobs from Scots."*

There needs to be a cultural shift in attitudes, an acknowledgment of white privilege and acceptance that mistakes have been made in the past that need to be recognised and learnt from. History must be accepted, with people focusing on the future and treating people equal regardless of ethnicity or belief. School curriculum should include more teaching of the diverse lifestyles and cultures of various people to encourage acceptance and understanding.

*Scottish Gypsy/Travellers are the most long-standing ethnic minority in Scotland going back to around 1200, providing much needed services and contributing to society with a rich history of storytelling, folk songs, poetry and music etc for centuries.*

It was felt that more could be done to promote the successes of the BAME community, not only in their fight for equality but for achievements they have made to science, politics, arts etc. Focusing on career progression of BAME workers, investigating why BAME workers leave workplaces, empowering BAME workers to speak up, particularly when they are concerned about the risk of doing so were all highlighted as potential areas for action. BAME people, particularly women, are more likely to be under-employed relative to their skills and qualifications and it would be useful to see more specific action to address this.

## Equality theme 5: Safer communities and gender-based violence



### Feedback on draft outcome and actions

It was felt that this theme and the actions were too narrow and that it must be recognised that men can be victims of violence too. Men can feel too embarrassed or ashamed to seek help, may be turned away from shelters or mocked when they ask for support. This must be tackled as men have rights too. In addition, all children (irrespective of sex or gender-identity) should be included in this outcome.

*If equality is to be achieved, missing one group -heterosexual males - will just exacerbate the fact those who experience domestic abuse are already marginalised in terms of recognition and services.*

Better consideration of the discrimination and violence against people with disabilities, migrants, people in same-sex relationships, women and children with no recourse to public funds would also be welcomed by respondents.

It was suggested that reflecting on the changed realities that women have faced during the pandemic (disproportionate impact of loss of care infrastructure, job and income loss, implications of restricted movement) and the increase of instances of violence would be helpful to shape action.

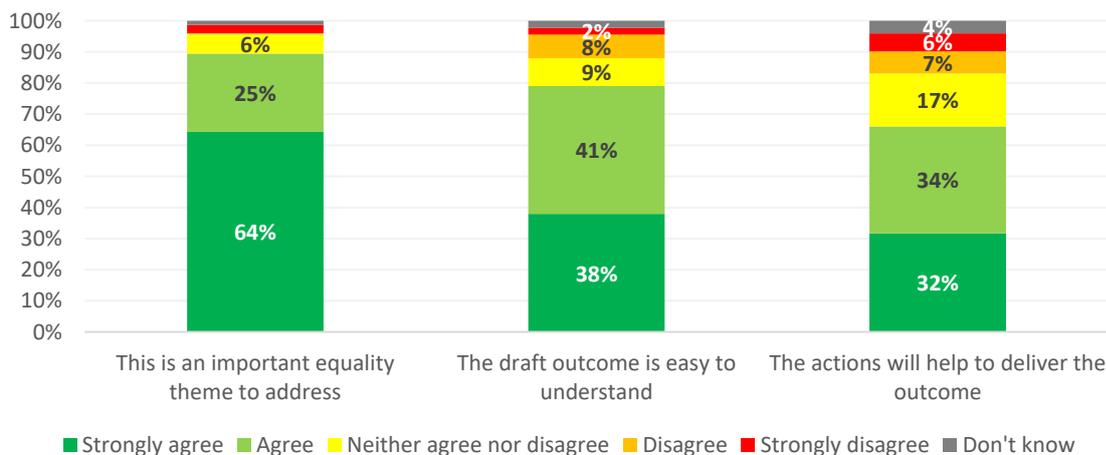
Cultural and media stereotypes need to be challenged. There needs to be better education on what is meant by GBV and what is unacceptable behaviour. More should be done to encourage and support victims to speak out.

It was felt that the actions were too broad and that they should mention specific courses that would help to educate people, charities/partners/shelters that can work together, specific school programs to be developed. More training should be provided for staff to support victims. Support should be provided to younger people who have had experiences of domestic violence or trauma to transition to adult life and address the learned behaviours which they may have experienced.

Some respondents argued that it is sex-based violence, rather than gender-based. Even if someone is targeted because of their gender identity, it was felt that this was because of the attacker's views on sex and the stereotypes attached to the sexes. In addition, some respondents felt that combining the issues surrounding gender and sex disregards the rights and needs of women and girls.

Some respondents also questioned references to the "trans community" or 'LGBTQ+ community'. It was felt that by referring to these groups as separate communities only highlighted the perceived differences of these groups rather than encourage equality and a sense of whole community.

## Equality theme 6: Workplaces



### Feedback on draft outcome and actions

Respondents highlighted that the theme does not address disability in the workplace. It was felt that more could be done to get disabled people into the workplace – providing effective technology access at home, safe home working environment, accessible buses, cost-effective mobility access etc.

Better awareness and understanding of autism, ADHD, anxiety disorders by employers would allow appropriate allowances and adjustments to be made in the workplace. Employment programmes could be developed for young autistic school leavers who may or may not have managed to acquire school level qualifications but have a lot to offer to the community within their particular skill area.

Maternity and paternity were also highlighted as an area of indirect discrimination. Better understanding of the needs and rights of carers in the workplace is required, with recognition that work does not stop when a carer leaves their workplace for the day.

Workplace culture must be addressed. Respondents spoke of incidents where direct and indirect discrimination in the workplace were not reported due to fears of being perceived as troublemakers or reports not being taken seriously. It can be difficult to know where to turn for support or advice regarding workplace issues. Reporting of issues needs to be supported, encouraged and made easier. Employees should be able to access advocacy services and ongoing emotional support. Promoting independent whistleblowing schemes is important. Equality and diversity training should be part of induction.

Respondents highlighted that there was nothing in the theme that addressed promotion or pay inequality.

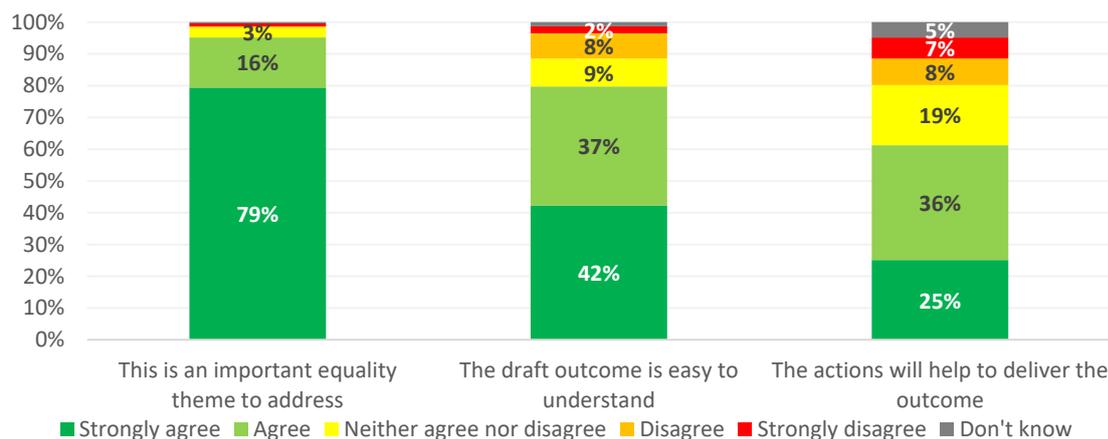
*Until people doing jobs that are traditionally carried out by women (such as care work, cleaning/ domestic work) are paid a decent wage, the inequality will continue. It is not enough to get women into high paid jobs traditionally carried out by males.*

Creating better pathways for disadvantaged groups to access employment, changes in recruitment processes and providing training for all recruiting managers on equalities and unconscious bias can address the barriers people face in accessing employment opportunities. In addition, reflecting on how the pandemic has had an impact recently on these barriers would be helpful. However, while respondents agreed with equality of opportunity, many still highlighted that the appropriate qualifications and skills of a person should be considered rather than employing a candidate based on quotas.

Some respondents felt that the theme focused too heavily on gender and sexuality in its supporting actions and that more consideration was needed for people with disabilities, religion and belief systems, ethnicity and cultural differences etc.

Recording the appropriate equality data is necessary but clarity is needed on why this information is being collected. Again, some respondents highlighted that while sex is a protected characteristic, gender identity is not.

## Equality theme 7: Mental health awareness, support and management



### Feedback on draft outcome and actions

The majority of respondents who commented on this theme highlighted that this is an area that requires additional resource and that access to support must be readily available. Currently, waiting lists to access support are too long. It was felt that this area needs significant funding at a national level to achieve any improvements.

*“My own experience is that mental health support in Lothian is essentially non-existent for people with moderate mental health conditions and inconsistent, difficult or impossible to access for people with long-term and more serious conditions. The service is drastically under-resourced and we are significantly over-relying on 'self-management'”*

Some respondents believed that the draft outcome put too much emphasis on people supporting themselves or self-managing their mental health. More consideration is needed on how those with mental health problems are not excluded from other health services due to barriers (e.g. living in alternative long stay hospital accommodation). If self-referral is the norm, then those suffering most may be discriminated against due to them not recognising the need for help or feeling they cannot ask for it. It was felt that early intervention programmes were key and that offering alternative methods to access counselling (other than via a GP) would be helpful. The NHS and local authorities could work in partnership with private psychotherapeutic offices to provide additional support or alternative methods of therapy.

The stigma attached to mental health must be addressed. Providing education in schools to address the lack of understanding that mental health affects everyone and language used in relation to mental health issues would help address barriers. Resources such as “Emotion Talks” and “Zones of Regulation and Social Thinking” were highlighted as good tools to support children to understand and regulate their emotions. Empathy courses should be made available in workplaces to encourage a culture of openness and support.

Wellbeing programmes were also highlighted as crucial in tackling mental health issues. It was suggested that subjects like yoga, meditation, nutrition for healthy mind and bodies encourage people to learn new skills, join social groups etc and help to build confidence and resilience. Access to greenspaces should be more explicit, with Dundee provided as an example where bus maps highlight access to greenspace facilities.

There needs to be more recognition that mental health issues are growing amongst children and young people. Wellbeing programmes noted above should be included in school curriculum.

*We do yoga and meditation in class sometimes... We did a lesson where we wrote our worries down and crunched them up to help get rid of them.*

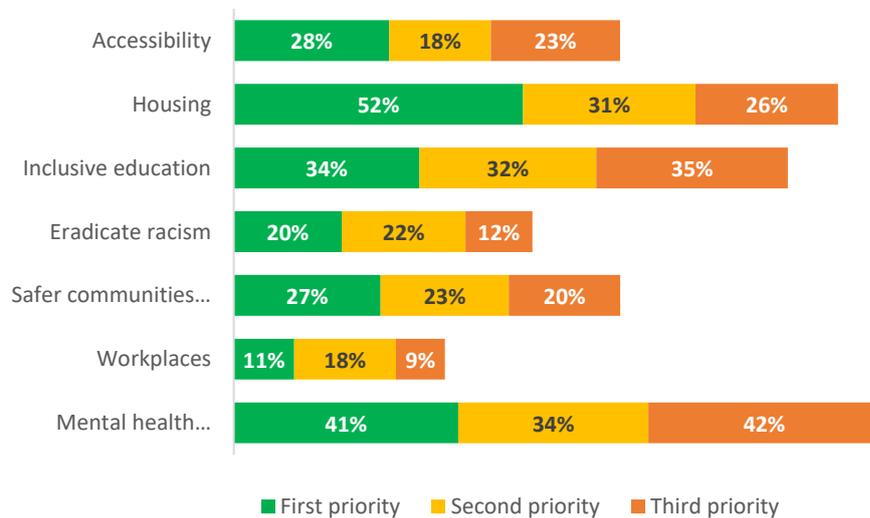
Parents should be offered courses on how to raise confident children, social media awareness etc to support young people better. In addition, recognition is needed regarding the mental health and wellbeing of carers and family members of those with special needs.

### Focusing our efforts

While respondents recognised that resources must be focused where they are most needed, they found it difficult to prioritise the themes. Respondents were concerned that by prioritising the themes it would mean others would not be addressed.

*They are all important. Does this mean that only the top three will be focussed on? What will happen with the others? It would be good to know.*

Some noted that there was crossover in the themes and suggested that lateral thinking was needed to creatively address overarching issues, and that it may be helpful to recognise that several areas can be achieved in short, medium and long-term initiatives.



### Other comments

Respondents were asked if there were any themes or specific actions that they thought should also be considered:

- Reducing poverty: recognising economic drivers of inequality, eradicating child poverty; tackling pay-day lenders; considering universal income
- Job opportunities for young people

- Disability awareness
- Recognition that Edinburgh's target of being net-zero and tackling use of cars / promotion of active travel excludes disabled people, e.g. single line parking, cycling paths with floating bus stops, taxi provision.
- Community learning in life skills & arts to promote social interaction, address isolation, boost mental health
- Action to address underachievement of boys in education
- Action to address high suicide rates, especially amongst men
- Support for separated families to reduce conflict and engage in shared parenting
- More provision for visually impaired and learning disabilities within East Lothian
- Emotional intelligence should be included as part education from an early age
- Gaelic medium education

It was suggested that initiatives happening nationally and internationally should be considered, with thought on how these could be adapted for Scotland.

Some respondents felt that there appeared to be a strong bias towards equality issues faced by trans people and questioned how equality of access for all could be ensured if such a strong bias existed towards one area.

## Appendix 1: general feedback on equality themes

<b>Accessibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People's lives are easier because we communicate clearly, and we have improved physical and digital access.</li> <li>• We use language that is simple to understand in our communications. We take measures to improve digital inclusion, so that people can access services digitally. We improve physical access.</li> </ul>
<b>Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we define affordable? There is a distinction between social and affordable housing so clarification would be welcomed.</li> </ul>
<b>Inclusive education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define inclusive.</li> <li>• The wording of the outcome is difficult to understand.</li> </ul>
<b>Eradicate racism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acronym BAME is being increasingly rejected.</li> <li>• Eradicating racism is unachievable – perhaps commit to working against racism.</li> <li>• The raising awareness action could be more targeted - who are we raising awareness amongst?</li> <li>• Will there be an implementation group across the local authorities for this?</li> <li>• Might be helpful to group actions by themes.</li> <li>• Some actions are worded to be specific to NHS but they should apply to all organisations in the partnership?</li> </ul>
<b>Safer communities...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action needs to be specific and practical – saying examine, investigate is too vague</li> <li>• Don't understand the reference to Covid-19</li> <li>• What is the priority around GBV? Do we want to reduce or eradicate?</li> <li>• Theme overlaps with Eradicate racism – part of the same issue</li> </ul>
<b>Workplaces</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too much jargon - "reverse mentoring schemes" and "workplace equality index."</li> <li>• What do we mean by organisation? – unclear whether we mean specific organisation or all organisations.</li> <li>• Actions seem to be based around data gathering rather than responding to data gathered.</li> </ul>
<b>Mental health...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcome seems brief and vague</li> <li>• Wording of the outcome sounds condescending, patronising and apathetic</li> <li>• The language used in the last point of the “Why it is important” section suggests that people with mental health issues are weaker than normal people</li> <li>• “Actions may include” is not specific enough</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2: demographic data

Age	Total	Percent
Under 16	2	1%
16 - 24	9	4%
25 - 34	30	12%
35 - 44	60	24%
45 - 54	59	23%
55 - 64	34	13%
65 - 74	21	8%
75 and over	4	2%
Prefer not to say	29	11%
Not Answered	7	3%

Medical conditions / disability	Total	Percent
Deafness or partial hearing loss	16	6%
Blindness or partial sight loss	6	2%
Full or partial loss of voice or difficulty speaking (a condition that requires you to use equipment to speak)	1	0%
Learning disability (a condition that you have had since childhood that affects the way you learn, understand information and communicate)	7	3%
Learning difficulty (a specific learning condition that affects the way you learn and process information)	12	5%
Developmental disorder (a condition that you have had since childhood which affects motor, cognitive, social and emotional skills, and speech and language)	5	2%
Physical disability (a condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, lifting or carrying)	23	9%
Mental health condition (a condition that affects your emotional, physical and mental wellbeing)	42	16%
Long-term illness, disease or condition (a condition, not listed above, that you may have for life, which may be managed with treatment or medication)	52	20%
No condition	113	44%
Prefer not to say	9	4%
Other condition, please state:	6	2%



Day-to-day limitations	Total	Percent
Yes, limited a lot	30	12%
Yes, limited a little	52	20%
No	133	52%
Prefer not to say	6	2%
Not Answered	34	13%

Sex	Total	Percent
Female	161	63%
Male	60	24%
Prefer not to say	30	12%
Not Answered	4	2%

Trans, trans history	Total	Percent
Prefer not to say	11	4%
No	196	80%
Yes	4	2%
Not Answered	34	14%

Sexual orientation	Total	Percent
Prefer not to say	30	12%
Heterosexual / straight	165	64%
Gay or Lesbian	11	4%
Bisexual	13	5%
Other sexual orientation	4	2%
Not Answered	33	13%

Marital status	Total	Percent
Prefer not to say	20	8%
Single	47	18%
Married/Civil partnership	111	44%
Separated	5	2%
Divorced/Legally dissolved	17	7%
Widowed	5	2%
Other (please specify)	17	7%
Not Answered	33	13%

Caring responsibilities	Total	Percent
Yes	83	33%
No	118	46%
Prefer not to say	7	3%
Not Answered	47	18%
If yes, type of caring responsibility:	Total	Percent
Primary carer of a child/children (under 18)	68	82%
Primary carer of disabled child/children	11	13%
Primary carer of disabled adult (18 and over)	8	10%
Primary carer of an older person (65 and older)	17	20%
Secondary carer	14	17%
Prefer not to say	1	1%

Ethnicity	Total	Percent
Scottish	131	56%
Other British	31	13%
Irish	8	3%
Gypsy / Traveller	1	0%
Polish	23	10%
Other white ethnic group	14	6%
Any mixed or multiple ethnic groups	4	2%
Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British	3	1%
Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British	3	1%
Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British	0	0%



Ethnicity	Total	Percent
Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British	0	0%
African, African Scottish or African British	1	0%
Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British	1	0%
Black, Black Scottish or Black British	1	0%
Arab	1	0%
Prefer not to say	5	2%

Religion or belief	Total	Percent
Prefer not to say	22	9%
None	111	47%
Church of Scotland	28	12%
Roman Catholic	19	8%
Other Christian	16	7%
Muslim	3	1%
Buddhist	1	0%
Sikh	1	0%
Jewish	2	1%
Hindu	0	0%
Pagan	5	2%
Another religion or belief	6	3%
Not Answered	41	18%