

SST Workforce Workstream Update:

January – May 2021


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You said

You encounter micro-aggressions and discrimination on a daily basis in everyday interactions - not only in specific incidents.



We did

February 2021:
In EDI week and beyond, we ran bite-sized EDI training sessions, in addition to our [learning opportunities on My Learning Source](#). The bite-sized sessions were attended by 159 colleagues. These courses will become part of the Learning and Development offer going forward.


What's next

Our overarching culture change working group is currently creating an anti-racist toolkit for employees which we hope to have drafted by the early June.

Find out more

For information about the bite-sized EDI training, please contact Mandy Headley.

To learn more about the Culture Change working group, please contact Lucinda Gray.



You said

Events showcasing and celebrating Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities receive very little support or funding.

We did

We have raised this with the SST programme leader (Jasbinder Baddhan) concerning external resident-focused session however internally, we will implement various EDI events and initiatives including on-going support to our Equality Staff Networks.

February 2021:
Events in the last 6 months included EDI week, and Black History Month.

What's next

Events are taking place to highlight Black Inclusion Week (10 – 16 May)

We have planned an Optima webinar on dealing with the effects of racism.

We have a Mental Health Awareness article on support for black men to be published on The Source and be circulated to front line services.

Optima will be providing 2 bespoke sessions addressing Mental Health Awareness for black staff in May 2021

Find out more

For information about the wider SST programme, please contact Jasbinder Baddhan

For information about Black Inclusion Week, EDI week and Black History Month, please contact Kate Enver.

You said

You are tired of the lack of transparency in decision making

We did

Ongoing since March 2021: As part of the Policies and Procedures and Recruitment working groups, in this exploration phase, we are reviewing and impact assessing all major policies, processes and practices to assess factors such as transparency. We hope to report on our findings in the late Spring.

March 2021: In the Engagement and Re-Education workstream, we have reviewed our own communication channels, to make sure we communicate with you as clearly as possible and provide a space for you to communicate with us also.

February 2021, ongoing: We have also created the SST Workforce Workstream [microsite](#) to share information with you.

What's next

Ongoing, since March 2021: We have recruited 30 [Employee Representatives](#) from across the council, who will support our working groups in creating and delivering their objectives in the next phase of the programme.

Find out more

For information about the Policies and Procedures working group, please contact Kate Enver.

For more information about the Engagement and Re-Education working group, please contact Lucinda Gray.

For information about the SST microsite, please contact Jide Daniel.

You said

You are constantly negatively impacted by inconsistent line management

We did

March 2021:
Through our Policies and Procedures Working Group, we have asked DWC, [our EDI consultant](#), to review the Business Managers Guide to Equalities.

Ongoing:
Our Leadership and Management working group is reviewing a full suite of existing support to line managers to assess its value.

We are embarking on a leadership engagement initiatives which will take our approach, support and expectations to our leaders – this has begun and will continue to ensure there is an understanding that anti-racism and justice is an embedded part of our leaders' roles.

What's next

Strategic Directors are leading on the development of SST departmental action plans for their departments. The action plans will be developed with the workforce and published on The Source so that you can see our progress.

Find out more

For information about the Policies and Procedures working group, please contact Kate Enver.

For information about the Leadership and Management working group, please contact Melanie Medley.

You said

There is a fear of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff showing emotion or calling out discrimination.

We did

February – April 2021:
Through the Engagement and Re-Education working group, we asked our EDI consultant to run [solution focused conversations](#), as a safe space to share experiences and explore solutions.

Ongoing:
In the longer term, in addition to the Employee Representatives, the Engagement and Re-Education working group are working to create a network of Equalities Champions who will call out discrimination in the workforce.

You can also contact us at SST@southwark.gov.uk

What's next

Ongoing:
For those who don't want to attend, we have created [a form](#) to share your experiences. Comments can be anonymous, if you wish. At the time of writing, we received 10 comments through the form.

There is one further solution focused conversation for Asian colleagues planned to take place on 24 May. More information will be published on the Source in due course.

Find out more

To learn more about the Solution Conversations, please contact Lucinda Gray.

To find out more about the Equalities Champions, please contact Natalie Preston.

You said

You feel isolated and feel there is not enough mental health support for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues. Especially in relation to mental health issues brought about by COVID-19. Line manager support will often vary.

We did

Ongoing:
We have arranged [Group Support for staff that have experienced racism](#). You can find a full list of support on the [Southwark Stands Together Workforce Workstream Microsite](#).

We have also created a [Wellbeing Toolkit](#), and trained Managers to support their team's wellbeing.

March 2021:
Through our Policies and Procedures Working Group, we have asked DWC to review the Business Managers Guide, the Managing Employee Health and the Sickness Absence Employee Guide.

What's next

Mental Health Week is taking place from 10 – 16 May. We will be putting on events and resources to support Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues

We plan to publish Mental Health Awareness articles for black men to run on the Source and Yammer.

We plan to run 2 webinars dedicated to MHA for black staff in May dates to be confirmed by Optima.

Find out more

To find out more about the support available to you, please contact Lisa Hallpike.

For information about the Policies and Procedures working group and Mental Health Week please contact Kate Enver.

You said

The process Southwark have in place to address racism in the workplace are unnecessarily too complicated and bureaucratic.

We did

March 2021:
Through our Policies and Procedures Working Group, we have asked DWC to review our Individual Employee Complaints Procedure, our Respect at Work Policy and Procedure and our Disciplinary procedures. We hope to report on our findings in the late Spring

What's next

Find out more

For information about the Policies and Procedures working group, please contact Kate Enver.



You said

Your career progression has been hindered due to favouritism and nepotism at play.

We did

Ongoing
In our Employee Career Progression working group, we are reviewing our internal career progression opportunities and benchmark against contemporary practice in other public and private bodies.

March 2021:
We also recruited [5 delegates](#) to participate in Black on Board, a governance training programme and depending on its success we will look at offering this out again alongside other opportunities for other initiatives.

March 2021:
Through our Policies and Procedures Working Group, we have asked DWC, to review our Performance Management policies and procedures.

What's next

In the Corporate Training Programmes working group, we have asked DWC to review our corporate training offer. We are looking to develop a leadership and management development programme for Black, Asian and ethnic minority colleagues as part of positive action.

Initial feedback from delegates has been positive. They will provide sound bites of their journey as they progress through the programme.

Find out more

For information about the Policies and Procedures working group, please contact Kate Enver.

For information about the Career Progression working group, please contact Dannette Thompson – Strategic HR Business Partner

You said

The lack of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people within senior leadership roles is worrying.

We did

October 2020 and March 2021:
In Black History Month, we have celebrated some of [the achievements of our Black Managers](#). We also ran a [Q & A Event](#) about careers of our Black managers. We will continue to run this through the year and not just during Black History Month.

Ongoing:
In our Recruitment Working group, we are testing new processes and procedures for hiring senior management posts (grade 14 and above). Since the beginning of the year, we have increase the amount of colleagues from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities by 3% at grade 14 and above.

More on the next page

What's next

We are reviewing the senior management recruitment practices to incorporate positive action to increase representation. The new policy will be shared on The Source once developed – timeframe to be agreed.

Find out more

For information about the Policies and Procedures working group, please contact Kate Enver.

For information about the Leadership and Management working group, please contact Melanie Medley.

You said

The lack of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people within senior leadership roles is worrying.

We did

March 2021:
Through our Policies and Procedures Working Group, we have asked DWC to review our Recruitment and Selection policies. We hope to report on our findings in the late Spring


What's next

Find out more



You said

You do not understand why claims and evidence of racist and discriminatory behaviour have no consequences.



We did

March 2021:
Through our Policies and Procedures Working Group, we have asked DWC to review our Individual Employee Complaints Procedure, our Respect at Work Policy and Procedure and our Disciplinary procedures. We hope to report on our findings in the late Spring.

We have opened external investigations into past claims on racist and discriminatory behaviour.


What's next

Leaders and managers are being trained throughout May and June on their responsibilities and development of the SST departmental toolkit will identify intervention areas requiring a deeper focus to address areas of concern with regards to race

Find out more

For information about the Policies and Procedures working group, please contact Kate Enver.

For more information about Leadership and Management, please contact Melanie Medley.



You said

You were concerned about the use of the term 'BAME'.

We did

May 2021:
We have decided to stop using the term 'BAME' in our communities and workforce and we will refer to our people as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues going forward

What's next

Find out more

For more information, please contact Melanie Medley.

