Waltham Forest
Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)
Making a Living Summit
Recommendations Report

2022

Waltham Forest EDI Making a Living Summit

Who are the members?

The Summit members are a group of 32 people who live in the London Borough of Waltham Forest. They were selected as representatives and members of communities who experience significant inequality around making a living.

Together they make up the members of the 'Waltham Forest EDI Making a Living Summit'.

They came together for 'in-person' events over three weekend days in March 2022 to reflect on the following task:

> **From accessing a quality education to finding a good job, from earning a reasonable wage to drawing a liveable pension, there are many in Waltham Forest who face insurmountable barriers and discrimination when they are trying to make a living.**
>
> **What actions can we take to make Waltham Forest a fairer and more equal borough, and support everyone to make a good living?**

The Summit Members are:

Abdur-Raheem	Farah	Kim	Sahrish
Ana Maria	Farhana	Lesley Anne	Shumsa
Anthony	Islam	Monica	Silma
Aslam	Izaura	Nehemiah	Sol
Bushra	Jacqueline	Nicolae	Syeda
Ellen	Jose Alexis	Olatunde	Terry
Ewan	Karen	Pam	Virginia
Fabian	Katrina	Pamela	Zahra

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Who was involved?

London Borough of Waltham Forest

The Council wants residents to have more say over decisions that affect them and to learn more from their experiences, views, and ideas to make Waltham Forest an even better place to live and work. The EDI Making a Living Summit brought together a sample of people who represent the diversity of the community to look at the topic of Making a Living in the borough. The aim was to try and find ideas making a fairer, more equal borough, which can support everyone to make a good living.

Democratic Society

Democratic Society[1] (Demsoc) works for more and better democracy, where people and institutions have the desire, opportunity, and confidence to participate together. They work to create opportunities for people to become involved in the decisions that affect their lives and for them to have the skills to do this effectively.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to everyone involved in making this incredible EDI Making a Living Summit happen.

Our sincere thanks go to all the fantastic participants, guest speakers, facilitators, support team, and of course to the staff at London Borough of Waltham Forest for providing the necessary resources, imagination, and determination to make it happen.

The recommendations developed by the Summit members detailed in this report, will be presented to the Council as soon as possible. The Council will then use these recommendations to develop the EDI Making a Living Strategy, setting out the actions to address inequalities around making a living.

Summit members will be involved and updated throughout these next steps. The detail of the next steps can be found on section 5.1 of this report.

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[1] www.demsoc.org

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Executive Summary

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Waltham Forest Council is working to reduce inequalities, to help people to make a living and create change across the borough. To do this, a multi-method approach and broad engagement has been used to capture a diverse range of voices in the lead up to the Waltham Forest EDI Making a Living Summit.

From here, the Summit introduces a deliberative process, where residents work together to produce a set of recommendations for the Council. As a totality, the work will help improve the way the Council works more effectively, to address the challenges in the question addressed by the Summit members.

The question

The Waltham Forest EDI Making a Living Summit consisted of 32 people living in the London Borough of Waltham Forest. They collectively developed recommendations that helped address the challenge statement and question set for them by the Council:

> **From accessing a quality education to finding a good job, from earning a reasonable wage to drawing a liveable pension, there are many in Waltham Forest who face insurmountable barriers and discrimination when they are trying to make a living.**
>
> **What actions can we take to make Waltham Forest a fairer and more equal borough, and support everyone to make a good living?**

In preparation for the Summit, a range of engagement activities took place to gather insights from diverse community groups, including workshops hosted by organisations from the voluntary and community sector (VCS), ethnographic case studies, face-to-face spontaneous conversations, and an online survey.

Findings from the engagement were analysed into themes and used to inform the challenge and question set for the Summit members, as well as used as an important bank of evidence for members to use during the Summit sessions.

Key themes from wider engagement

The key themes that emerged were:

1. Building inclusive workplaces
2. Developing good quality jobs for all
3. Learning, advice, and skills support for those who need it most
4. Creating a caring and fair system

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Recommendations and vote summary

The members together created 15 recommendation statements. On the last day of the Summit, they had the opportunity to decide their individual level of support for each recommendation, with a personal, anonymised vote on each one.

Out of a total of 32 members, this table shows how many members voted on each theme. A few participants didn't vote on all or some of the themes, either by choice or because they were absent at the time of the vote. Participants from the 'Building inclusive workplaces' didn't vote on their own recommendations which is reflected in the numbers below.

All the percentages in the following pages have been calculated based on the number of participants who took part in the voting per theme as shown in the table below.

Theme	Number of participants voting
Building inclusive workplaces	21
Developing good quality jobs for all	28
Learning, advice, and skills support for those who need it most	28
Creating a caring and fair system	29

All recommendations were approved with support from at least **81% or higher** of participants voting.

A summary of the final recommendations and the levels of support they received are as follows:

Recommendation Statements	SUPPORT % Rounded to nearest whole number
1. Building inclusive workplaces	
Recommendation 1: Reasonable Adjustment Passports (RAPs).	81%
Recommendation 2: Facilitating Flexible Working.	95%

Recommendation 3: Make job adverts and application forms available by making digital and hard copies.	95%
Recommendation 4: Consultation with all staff to get their input for an all-inclusive workspace. To include future proofing, acoustics, lighting, heating, accessibility, braille, toilets MF gender neutral, disabled.	86%

2. Developing good quality jobs for all

Recommendation 1: Improve travel/ public transport accessibility, affordability, and parking so that more employees can access jobs in the borough and more customers can travel to local businesses (which will lead to more sales, growth, and employment opportunities).	100%
Recommendation 2: The borough should encourage and support the creation of local internships, apprenticeships, and enterprise programmes (preferably paid), as well as mapping and coordinating existing ones, resulting in a clear online and in person (within community hubs) directory for people to use. These programmes should be for EVERYONE, but also with a large number specifically for marginalised and underrepresented groups, as well as those that aim to fill gaps within the community's needs.	86%
Recommendation 3: Employment support programmes tailored to different needs (e.g., for older people, back into work, young people etc).	93%
Recommendation 4: Council-funding mental health training for local employers (including in the Council) developed in partnership with mental health services, so that employers can better support employees, provided by local practitioners. This will include information packs for all employers, advice on language around rejection, enabling people to work from home, testimonies from people with lived experience, etc.	93%

3. Learning, advice, and skills support for those who need it most

Recommendation 1: Physical local building hub that provides tailored support, which meets the diverse needs of the wider community and empowers people to access skills, support and interests which can lead to social inclusion and/or employment.	100%

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Recommendation 2: Dedicated youth hubs that help young people and employers to take on young people on employment programmes that are paid and advertised well with thorough support, life skills and knowledge that is essential to the progression and to the future of young people in Waltham Forest. This could be face to face and social media/online integration.	93%
Recommendation 3: Evaluation of wants and needs for the underrepresented groups by: • Signposting to relevant organisations • Follow up to ensure the signposting is a success by monitoring and evaluating • Ambassadors from these groups to represent and support them.	96%

4. Creating a caring and fair system	
Recommendation 1: We recommend creating a space where residents, especially those who are marginalised or vulnerable, can access a wide range of services and resources.	100%
Recommendation 2: The Council to change its systems for accessing information and services so that people who are digitally excluded and/or housebound can easily access all Council services.	100%
Recommendation 3: There needs to be a system (with police in place) that is fair towards hours, leave and makes it easier to raise issues regarding work conditions, across all sectors for marginalised groups- to include the whole community (new and old).	97%
Recommendation 4: We recommend the Council 'go to' community spaces to engage with people who are prevented from, or unable to leave their homes due to coercion or domestic violence to highlight available services rather than expecting them to "come to us;" i.e., the Council.	100%

The contents of these recommendations and the reasons why the Summit members felt they are important are presented in more detail in of this report.

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1. Introduction

The EDI Making a Living Summit brought residents and Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) groups together to deliberate and decide on actions to help make Waltham Forest a more equal borough, and to provide support to everyone so they can make a good living. This three-day event was part of a longer-term programme of work addressing inequalities by Waltham Forest Council including:

1. **The State of the Borough report**, outlining the available data on inequalities in Waltham Forest – June 2021

2. **Community Conversations**, focussed engagement led by Waltham Forest Council in Autumn 2021 which included 400+ hours of engagement with 550 residents, to hear from people who have experienced inequalities associated with making a living.

    The table below shows the breakdown of this long-term engagement:

Engagement method	Number of residents engaged	Resident engagement in hours
Workshops	136	272
Ethnographic research	13	65
Mass engagement[*]	97	20
Face-to-face with young people aged 16–25[†]	34	10
Digital engagement (EDI survey)	270	40.5
Total	**550**	**407.5**

3. **Roundtable** online event, keeping VCS and residents involved in the process in December 2021

4. **Waltham Forest EDI – Making a Living Summit** – March 2022

The aim of the Summit was to link this work together, for Summit members to consider the evidence and their own lived experiences, and then to develop recommendations that will

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[*] Waltham Forest Council staff attended various events to ensure spontaneous conversations could be held with residents on the theme of making a living. These took place at Fellowship Feast, Chingford Car-Free Day, Jobs Fest and a Green Jobs Fair.

[†] The Council's youth-run outreach team – **Streetbase** – conducted high-level conversations on barriers to making a living, in Leytonstone, Leyton, Walthamstow and Chingford.

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form the basis of the **Council's EDI Making a Living Strategy**. The strategy will set out exactly how the Council, and the borough, will work to tackle inequalities.

This report captures the journey of the EDI Making a Living Summit and shares the recommendations written by the members who were part of this process.

1.1 How the Summit worked

The Summit used the method of deliberation (one that brings together a group of people who have an important role in solving a particular problem). It is a methodology used all over the world to look at issues and to explore solutions. The participants, selected to broadly represent residents most affected by the topic, learnt about the issues and the previous work from Community Conversations, discussed ideas about how to make the borough more equal, and decided on actions for how that change should happen.

Summit sessions were delivered in three phases:

Learn – understanding context, challenges, and other areas of innovation

Deliberate – discussing potential solutions

Decide – agreeing practical action and recommendations

The Summit heard from a range of people during the three sessions, with subject-matter and practical expertise as well as lived-experience expertise. Through time spent learning, deliberating, and prioritising together, Summit members agreed on a final set of 15 recommendations for the Council.

1.2 How Summit members were selected

Participants for the EDI Making a Living Summit were recruited to broadly represent groups identified in earlier research and engagement as part of the Council's longer-term programme of work addressing inequalities, as being the most impacted by structural inequities around making a living. Invitations were sent to representatives from Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations, who were asked to invite people they work with, including people previously involved in the engagement. Best-practice principles were applied during the recruitment phase, to ensure the diverse community of Waltham Forest was broadly reflected. This was based on the following demographics: gender, age, employment status, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, and VCS group involvement.

Gender

More women than men applied, so a ratio of up to 2:1 female to male was applied during the Summit recruitment period. Participants included people who prefer to self-describe.

Age

Age range of participants was spread across seven brackets as follows:

Age range	Percentage
18-24	13%
25-34	19%
35-44	3%
45-54	19%
55-64	25%
65-74	22%

Employment status

Participants who described themselves as 'Employed' comprised 44% of the Summit, whilst 22% of participants said they were retired. Others (12%) described themselves as 'Self-employed' or 'Self-employed and part-time,' or 'Casual worker.' Those out of work (currently looking for work or unable to work) accounted for 9% of Summit participants. Another category included 6% of people defining themselves as students. A further 6% described themselves as 'Out of work and looking for work,' or those who preferred not to say.

Sexual orientation

On sexual orientation, 15% of people described themselves as Ace, Bisexual, Gay, or Queer and 19% said they would 'prefer not to say.' The other 66% of people described themselves as Heterosexual or Straight.

Disability

A total of 38% of participants identified as having a disability or living with a long-term health or mental health condition, with 50% saying that they did not. Just over 13% said they preferred not to say.

Ethnicity

The following classification[*] shows the spread of ethnic diversity as self-assigned by Summit members. This is presented in order of total percentage of participants and then alphabetically:

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[*] https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/measuringequality/ethnicgroupnationalidentityandreligion

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Ethnic Classification	Percentage totals
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	**34%**
African	
Caribbean	
Any other Black/African/Caribbean background	
Asian/Asian British	**25%**
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Any other Asian background	
White	**25%**
English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	
Irish	
Any other White background	
Other ethnic group	**9.3%**
Arab	
Any other ethnic group	
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	**3%**
White and Asian	
White and Black African	
White and Black Caribbean	
Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background	
Prefer not to say	**3%**

In other ethnic groups, participants identified as Latin American and Central and Eastern European.

VCS group

Summit members either described themselves as an individual resident (66%), or as representatives of Voluntary and Community Sector groups (30%). These included Age UK Waltham Forest, Nigerian Community, Shaw Trust, Waltham Forest Womens' Network, Waltham Forest Youth Independent Advisory Group, and Waltham Forest Youth for Christ. 'Unsure' was also selected by a small minority of 4%.

1.3 Welcome and onboarding

As the Summit was being delivered in-person, great care and attention was made towards ensuring that all participants were able to fully take part. Staff from the Democratic Society spoke to each participant before the first session to welcome them to the process and ensure they had everything they needed to take part (e.g., paid childcare, transport, accessible

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materials, other needs/factors that needed considering). Any barriers to involvement were addressed, so that Summit members were able to have a meaningful experience.

1.4 Broader engagement and speaker input

Extensive engagement from the longer-term equalities work already undertaken by the Council had been gathered, synthesised, and analysed in preparation for the Summit. This then formed an important part of the evidence brought for consideration at the Summit. Speakers with a range of backgrounds and experiences were invited to ensure input at the Summit was accurate, balanced, and unbiased. Participants themselves were encouraged to reflect on their own lived experience and to share this throughout the Summit sessions – in pairs, in small groups and with the whole group as part of plenary and a final open mic activity.

1.5 Recording and sharing evidence

Paper copies of all the presentations and other materials were provided to participants during the Summit. Summit members could bring them home to access between weekends to refresh knowledge, or to refer to in their own time. They were also made available electronically in a shared online folder at the end of the Summit. A small number of observers were present throughout all Summit sessions and were able to hear expert speakers giving evidence. They were not allowed to listen in to table discussions or approach Summit members, to prevent interruption or undue influence. Observers were both individuals and from organisations with an interest in the topic and/or the process of hosting a Summit.

1.6 A high quality, tailored experience

Given the long-term approach to the topic and the diversity of the Summit participants, careful planning went into the design of the process to make sure it was inclusive.

Waltham Forest Council and The Democratic Society worked collaboratively to provide:

- Briefing meetings with the facilitators and support team, to make sure the best support was provided for Summit members
- A welcoming venue, accessible for all
- Locally sourced refreshments, supporting local and community-run catering businesses
- Long lunches and timely breaks to give people time to unwind and connect with each other
- A place to 'park' important ideas, but which that did not fit the topic
- A prayer room – accessible at any time
- A quiet room for anyone who needed some time out

As a result of participant feedback, some elements were improved along the way. This included how the venue was used, as well as introducing more breakout areas for groups to work in at the following weekend to improve acoustics and help with smaller group discussions. The breakout areas replaced the quiet room on day two & three.

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2. The work of the EDI Making a Living Summit

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The Waltham Forest EDI Making a Living Summit met over three weekend days in March 2022:

- **Saturday 5 March**
- **Saturday 19 March**
- **Sunday 20 March**

Summit members took part in around 20 hours of learning, deliberation, and decision-making as a group. The process was designed by the Democratic Society with input from Waltham Forest Council officers, based on insight from the previous equalities work gathered from Community Conversations.

Each session was led by experienced lead facilitators, Mel Stevens and Pandora Ellis from the Democratic Society. Small group discussions were facilitated by experienced table facilitators, also from the Democratic Society. Each of the four groups was comprised of one facilitator and between six to nine Summit members. A 'roaming facilitator' from the Council rotated around each activity. This was to build skills and capacity in Waltham Forest Council. Note keepers supported each table, all of whom were Waltham Forest Council staff.

Summit members sat according to a seating plan which was changed between the first and second day but remained on the same tables from the second day onwards so they could complete their final recommendations to the Council.

The EDI Making a Living Summit process in detail

Day One – Saturday 05 March

Deepening our understanding, the context, and the challenge

The first day brought Summit members together to meet one another and get established as a group. Activities and inputs supported Summit members to understand the scope and purpose of the Summit, and why it had been called. Time was spent exploring the topic, the challenges and some of the existing support.

Conversation Guidelines

In the morning, after a first round of introductions and icebreaker activity, Summit members were asked to draft a set of Conversation Guidelines for how they wanted to work with each other during the event. (Appendix 6.1).
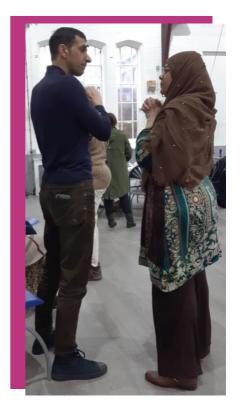
Speakers input and Q&A

The Summit members then heard from two speakers: the Leader of Waltham Forest Council **Councillor Grace Williams** and Cabinet Member for Community and Voluntary Sector **Councillor Ahsan Khan**. They gave an overview of the EDI Making a Living Summit context, describing some of the high-level issues; hope and aspirations, with an outline of the Council's journey so far; the rationale of the four working groups; the impact that was expected from the Summit and commitment of the Council to act upon the recommendations.

Pauline Campbell, Chair of the Council's Race Equality Network and author of 'Rice & Peas and Fish & Chips'**,** shared her compelling personal story, navigating equality and racism into a senior legal position advising on race equality and providing free legal advice for victims of the Windrush scandal.

Summit members had a chance to discuss and reflect on what they had heard and agree questions for the speakers. Notes and questions were captured by note keepers for each table.

Next was a chance for Summit members to spend time discussing the topic with each other on their tables. In pairs, ideas were captured on post-its before sharing with the rest of their table. Ideas were then clustered and themed on flip chart and two key points were shared with the whole room.

Morning day one - Speaker summary - welcome from the Council

Summit and its purpose	**Councillor Grace Williams** - Leader of Waltham Forest Council **Councillor Ahsan Khan -** Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Voluntary sector
State of the Borough video*	Short film that accompanies the State of the Borough Report and evidence of structural inequality
Personal story and experience	**Pauline Campbell** – Senior Litigation Lawyer, Waltham Forest Council, and author of 'Rice & Peas and Fish & Chips'

After lunch, the EDI Making a Living Summit reviewed and adopted their Conversations Guidelines.

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* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hyVUu_axzC0

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The four EDI themes – creating a problem statement

Next was an activity to explore the four themes which emerged from the Community Conversations (see Introduction for more detail):

1. Building inclusive workplaces
2. Developing good quality jobs for all
3. Learning, advice, and skills support for those who need it most
4. Creating a caring and fair system

Each table was allocated one theme and had a set of cards with over 90 challenges and 75 solutions which came from the Community Conversations, with a task to match an issue with a lived experience solution.

This led to an exercise in which a problem statement was drafted by each group. The task was to agree one or two sentences which explained the problem associated with their theme. The problem was defined, alongside a description of why solving the problem is important.

These statements would be circulated and reviewed over the following Summit days, so that all participants would have the opportunity to input into each theme. (Section 3 Problem and Vision Statements)

Speaker input – what is happening already

Two speakers from Waltham Forest Borough Council - **Ben Browne and Alan Ollier-Thompson** gave an overview of what is happening already, along with existing support and gaps in what the Council is providing.

Following the same pattern as the morning, Summit members had a chance to discuss and agree questions for each of the speakers. Notes and questions were captured by note keepers for each table.

After hearing from all the speakers, and recording questions and answers, Summit members were reminded of what they have achieved together. Clarification was sought on purpose in an open questions session. What lay ahead for days two and three added more context to the Summit purpose and journey.

Afternoon day one - Speaker summary – what is happening already in the Council

Inclusive workplaces	**Ben Browne** – Director of People and Organisational Development, Waltham Forest Council
Training and skills for residents	**Alan Ollier-Thompson** – Head of Skills, Waltham Forest Council

The day ended with a sharing activity in pairs, for people to exchange what surprised them from day one and what they were looking forward to for day two.

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Day Two – Saturday 19 March

Thinking more widely about policy solutions

The second day of the Summit sought to introduce innovative interventions from outside the borough and explore how these might relate to Waltham Forest. This was to spark ideas for Summit members to arrive at initial solutions, which could be tested with practitioners. Summit members were also reminded to draw from the insight from Community Conversations, and their own lived experience of the topic.

Policy and data context

After an icebreaker activity, **Courtney Stephenson** and **Ciaran Cummins** from Demos[*] gave a presentation of work they have been doing to get an understanding of the labour market in Waltham Forest. They also shared examples of good practice more widely. Jon Lloyd from Waltham Forest Council followed up with questions. Demos were on hand with other practitioners afterwards, for Summit members to talk to and test their ideas with.

Problem statement and vision

Table activity for day two started by reviewing the problem statement exercise from day one. To gain input from a wider pool of Summit members, the four problem statements were randomly allocated to each table. Groups were asked to review and revise each problem statement and add a 'vision' statement for each of the four themes.

The following activity was to reflect on everything that has been heard so far and make a longlist of ideas for actions that can make Waltham Forest a fairer and more equal borough, which supports everyone to make a living. Time was given to share, discuss and agree these ideas, and to prioritise each table's top two per theme. Space was given for reserve ideas if agreement could not be sought.

Ideation, top ideas, and testing

In the afternoon, a session was introduced to share ideas and possible solutions for each theme. Each table was allocated a theme and asked to shape ideas by gathering feedback from 'testing partners.' These were a range of people with different backgrounds and experiences who were able to provide support, advice and guidance on the four themes.

Next came a process to choose which ideas need more input, feedback, and testing. Each group were asked to theme and cluster ideas and arrive at eight top ideas against their allocated theme. These were added to testing posters. Testing partners visited each table to review testing posters and give feedback. This enabled groups to refine their thinking and reach conclusion on a final version of their ideas, resulting in 30 developed ideas from each of the Summit tables in total. (Appendix 6.2)

'Dotmocracy'

The final activity for the second day was to prioritise the ideas so far, as a starting point for turning these into recommendations. Summit members were encouraged to roam to each

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[*] https://demos.co.uk

table and read each ideas poster. They were given three sticky dots per theme to show which idea they, as individuals, considered were most important.

The final round enabled groups to review their own theme, and how other Summit members had prioritised ideas. Using these results, each table discussed and agreed four priority ideas. In a plenary exercise, each table shared their priority ideas, to take forward as recommendations on the following day.

Saturday morning, day two speakers – innovation and interventions from outside Waltham Forest

Understanding the labour market Best practice interventions	Courtney Stephenson and Ciaran Cummins - Demos
Questioning Demos	Jon Lloyd - Director of Strategy, Insight and Communities, London Borough of Waltham Forest

Day Three – Sunday 20 March

Agreeing actions

On the final day, Summit members spent the morning concluding problem statements and vision for each of the four themes. Summit members were reminded of their four priority ideas in preparation for drafting recommendations. An A4 template was shared to help prepare groups understand how to construct their recommendations. They were asked to consider in detail how their draft recommendation addressed the theme, the problem statement, and the vision. Facilitators prompted their groups on whether their recommendations were written clearly and were understandable to others. Also, whether each recommendation was ambitious enough.

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Roaming feedback

Before lunch, Summit members were invited to visit each other's tables to read and comment on every draft recommendation. This was to give everyone a chance to give feedback and have input on every recommendation in each theme across the whole Summit. After lunch, groups reviewed the feedback from the roaming exercise and finalised their recommendations.

Preparing to present

The final part of day three was to share the recommendations by presenting them to Waltham Forest Council and, as importantly, to each other as a whole Summit. To prepare, each table were asked to decide who would present, aiming for diversity of voice in this opportunity to share their hard work.

Voting

After each of the recommendations in the four themes were presented, Summit members took part in a vote on their level of support. They voted individually using paper ballots on whether they **strongly supported, supported, opposed, or strongly opposed** each of the recommendations. All the recommendations received over 81% support of the participants who voted. The results breakdown from this voting can be found in the following pages.

Sunday afternoon day three – receivers of final recommendations

Receiving recommendations	**Summit Members** - Waltham Forest EDI Making a Living Summit
Receiving recommendations	**Councillor Ahsan Khan**, Cabinet Member for Community and Voluntary Sector and **Councillor Vicky te Velde**, Cabinet Commissioner for Equalities **-** Waltham Forest Council

Open mic

The Summit closed with an 'open mic' session. This was to ensure Summit members had the last word in sharing feedback on whole process, for them as individuals.

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3. The EDI Making a Living Summit Recommendations

At the end of the process, EDI Making a Living Summit members presented a set of final recommendations in response to the question the Assembly had been set:

From accessing a quality education to finding a good job, from earning a reasonable wage to drawing a liveable pension, there are many in Waltham Forest who face insurmountable barriers and discrimination when they are trying to make a living.

What actions can we take to make Waltham Forest a fairer and more equal borough, and support everyone to make a good living?

The recommendations were presented to Councillor Khan and Councillor te Velde, and to each other as members of the Summit as a whole. They were clustered in the four EDI themes (Introduction).

Please note that all the percentages displayed below the detailed recommendations to indicate the level of support have been calculated based on the number of participants voting per theme as shown in the table on page 9.

Because the vote was done in person on ballot papers, a few participants have given two votes on some of the recommendations. In that case, the votes have been counted as invalid to avoid skewing the results. When the results were still readable, they have been specified underneath.

Problem and Vision Statements

Tables collectively wrote a problem statement and vision statement for each of the four themes.

1.Building Inclusive Workspaces
Problem statement Residents and employees report an absence of inclusive workspaces in Waltham Forest. In turn, this has highlighted a lack of well-paid local opportunities for marginalised and unrepresented individuals.
Vision statement The London Borough of Waltham Forest aims to give voices to marginalised and unrepresented groups by working with charities and community organisations to support employers with creating welcoming, accessible, and safe workplaces for all.

2. Developing good quality jobs for all

Problem statement

The Council need to do more work in understanding the wider community needs, barriers both of residents and businesses – in order to have good quality, accessible and sustainable jobs for everyone. The problem is that not all jobs pay a living wage. Living wage is not enough, given the context of rising living costs.

Vision statement

A borough where people's and community needs are understood and met, where all jobs are valued and able to progress for the wider community to benefit in a holistic way, to enable greater economic development and social interaction by meeting and matching the needs of businesses and residents.

3. Learning, advice, and skills support for those who need it most

Problem statement

The Council and other businesses are not sufficiently active in identifying and addressing inequalities in the learnings, advice and skills sector, not addressing issues and factors that make support difficult to <u>access</u>, such as:

- Young people guidance through career choices
- Reskilling opportunities for adults at moments of change in life
- Childcare sponsors for single parents accessing education
- Support to access education/training for those with language barriers/mental health/health disabilities and challenges
- Older people excluded form learning, advice and skills
- Asylum Seekers and excluded Asian Woman

Vision statement

A borough where <u>no one</u> is excluded from learning, advice and skills, goods and services, <u>inclusive</u> of IT skills or access, asylum status, race, gender, sexual orientation, housing status language barriers, education level, age and disability – understanding of the <u>purpose</u> of businesses and services in the community.

4. Creating a caring and fair system

Problem statement

There are wider issues than just having a job. Leaders need to address the limitations and barriers for marginalised groups, to accessing information, advice, benefits, childcare, humane housing and all Council services.

Vision statement

We want a borough where the leaders tackle the limitations and barriers, including for marginalised groups, to accessing support and create an equal system from grassroot level

Waltham Forest EDI Summit Recommendations and Results of the Vote

3.1 Building Inclusive Workplaces

Building Inclusive Workspaces

Recommendation 1 - Reasonable Adjustment Passports (RAPs)

Why is it important?

- To remove the need to repeat needs throughout working life
- Easier to start/have the conversation
- Reduces stress, embarrassment of explaining medical conditions
- As it gets adopted it simplifies changing roles, workplaces
- Avoids misunderstanding and potential bullying

Detailed Description

- Anyone with health needs, impairments, or disability (visible/invisible)
- Employers, being able to manage employees to increase productivity through support and understanding
- Lobby government to mandate RAPs

- Template for best practice for employers boroughwide
- Enable employers to make reasonable adjustments
- To engage trade unions to sell the process

Voting Results

Invalid	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither support nor oppose	Support	Strongly Support
1*	0	3	0	5	12
5%	0%	14%	0%	24%	57%

* This ballot paper had both Strongly support and Support

Building Inclusive Workspaces

Recommendation 2 – Facilitating flexible working

Why is it important?

- Getting the most from employees, staff retention
- Removing barriers to optimising employees work
- Enable wider range of employees that might otherwise face barriers to employment
- Make the employer more attractive

Detailed Description

- People with caring responsibilities and anyone else who it applies to
- Flexible working not pressurising themselves
- Employers encouraging, supporting staff to take breaks

- Hybrid working opportunities/home/life balance
- Review pilot 2015 post and pre pandemic
- Showcasing best practise

Voting Results

Invalid	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither Support nor Oppose	Support	Strongly Support
0	1	0	0	6	14
0%	5%	0%	0%	29%	67%

Building Inclusive Workspaces

Recommendation 3 – Make job adverts and application forms available to all by making digital and hard copies

Why is it important?

- Access for all paper as well as digital applications (choice) because not everyone can access computers and internet
- Make it easier for people to find jobs available

Detailed Description

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- Availability at multiple sites: libraries, job centres, local newspapers (Council and Echo)
- Tailor application closing dates in line with publication

- Local jobs website on LBWF web where all employers can advertise. One stop shop
- Council signs up to next door app
- Availability of advocates and support workers

Voting Results

Invalid	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither Support nor Oppose	Support	Strongly Support
0	0	1	0	9	11
0%	0%	5%	0%	43%	52%

Building Inclusive Workspaces

Recommendation 4 – Consultation with all staff to get their input for an all-inclusive workplace. To include future proofing, acoustics, lighting, heating, accessibility, braille, toilets M/F gender neutral, disabled.

Why is it important?

- Planning open and honest inclusive environment of staff views and needs
- Cheaper in the long run
- Green agenda

- Loop system
- Recycled air
- Wheelchair accessibility
- Prayer rooms

Detailed Description

- Everybody
- Deaf
- Blind
- Disabled
- Neurodiverse
- LGBTQI+

- Religious Beliefs
- Multi Faith
- Research from: charity experts, mental health mind
- Team building to have ongoing discussions to meet changing needs

Voting Results

Invalid	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither Support nor Oppose	Support	Strongly Support
0	0	3	0	4	14
0%	0%	14%	0%	19%	67%

3.2 Developing Good Quality Jobs for All

Developing Good Quality Jobs for All

Recommendation 1 – Improve travel/public transport accessibility, affordability, and parking so that more employees can access jobs in the borough and more customers will travel to local businesses (which will lead to more sales, growth, and employment opportunities).

Why is it important?

- Increase access to local shops
- Businesses ie., increase economic growth employment
- People can safely travel to work
- Reduce loneliness
- Affordable transport enables everyone to access employment reducing pollution

Detailed Description

Who will benefit?
- Everyone in the borough
- People being attracted to the borough
- Future generations as we rebuild after the pandemic
- Local businesses will grow

Who will be involved?
- All residents
- Policy and decision makers
- Regular workshops with unemployed to hear their voices (create agenda with consultation)

What actions are needed?
- Lobbying by Councillors to government to ensure changes will happen
- Residents need to have more of a say in where their money is spent. Rather than political agenda.

- Council should use bus/transport advertising, free newspapers
- Digital inclusion to raise awareness about services and jobs.
- Existing communications with residents very poor-this must change
- Increase mobility for access to jobs, hubs (training, information workshops)
- Good public transport for shift workers, unsociable hours, nurses, doctors, security.
- Poor access/ affordability to public transport. More disabled parking, similar blue badge process
- Remove (LTN) London Traffic Neighbourhoods because they cause anger and death.

Voting Results

Invalid	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither Support nor Oppose	Support	Strongly Support
0	0	0	0	7	21
0%	0%	0%	0%	25%	75%

Developing Good Quality Jobs for All

Recommendation 2 – The borough should encourage and support the creation of local internships, apprenticeships, and enterprise programmes (preferably paid), as well as mapping and coordinating existing ones, resulting in a clear online and in person (within community hubs) directory for people to use. These programmes should be for EVERYONE, but also with a large number specifically for marginalised and underrepresented groups, as well as those that aim to fill gaps within the community's needs.

Why is it important?

- Personal development
- Employment journey (learning skills)
- Getting a foot on the jobs ladder
- It is difficult to find and take part in programmes such as these – coordinating them would allow for people to find them more easily, and mapping them will enable you to see what new programmes are needed (plugging gaps)
- Historically certain groups have been unable to access programmes like this (lack of networks, prejudice etc) so by targeting them it will help to tackle disparities and help them progress

Detailed Description

- Underrepresented and disadvantaged groups
- Create apprenticeship officer, role to oversee and coordinate the programmes
- Inclusive advertising e.g., removing protective characteristics or targeted advertising (depending on the nature of the programme)
- Council funding businesses to run the programmes (pot of money)

- Small business forum to discuss needs and methods
- Mentoring within enterprise programmes
- Council – organisation
- Local business - providing
- The public - using

Voting Results

Invalid	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither Support nor Oppose	Support	Strongly Support
1*	1	2	0	8	16
4%	4%	7%	0%	29%	57%

* This ballot paper had both Strongly support and Support

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Developing Good Quality Jobs for All

Recommendation 3 – Employment support programmes tailored to different needs (e.g., for older people, back into work, young people etc).

Why is it important?

- Sense of worth/acceptance
- Positive mental health
- Removes all barriers, not just one (holistic!) and progress to a higher wage

Detailed Description

Who will benefit?

Vulnerable and unrepresented residents:

- Unemployed
- Employed and poor (in-work poverty)
- Back to work
- Mental health
- Disability
- Older and young people
- Ethic and language barriers
- Lone mothers
- Homeless

Who needs to be involved:

- WF Council
- NHS
- Charities
- Colleges

What actions need to happen?

- Incorporate different types of support for people with different needs and barriers – wrap-around support (e.g., childcare, training and employment advice, health, and benefits etc)
- Multiple accessible locations around the borough with flexible working hours (not just 9-5)
- More supported internships and apprenticeships for people with disabilities of all ages (i.e., more project SEARCH sites the Council can lead on this as other boroughs do)
- More specific hiring initiatives and opportunities (e.g., specific jobs fairs)
- Funding – integrate and adapt existing funding from government and Mayor of London and pilot programmes from National Lottery.

Voting Results

Invalid	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither Support nor Oppose	Support	Strongly Support
0	0	2	0	9	17
0%	0%	7%	0%	32%	61%

Developing Good Quality Jobs for All

Recommendation 4 – Council-funding mental health training for local employers (including in the Council) developed in partnership with mental health services, so that employers can better support employees, provided by local practitioners. This will include information packs for all employers, advice on language around rejection, enabling people to work from home, testimonies from people with lived experience, etc.

Why is it important?

- Everyone has mental health needs that need to be managed
- Tackling stigma and increasing empathy/improving wellbeing, enabling individuals holistically
- Promotes employability and boosts productivity
- Employers need to act fast to provide support, but also connect people to further professional support if needed – relying less on medical practitioners
- Promote flexibility and balance in employees' lives

Detailed Description

Who will benefit?

- Employees
- Employers
- Everyone really

Who needs to be involved?

- WF Council
- Local employers and business associates
- NHS
- Mind CHWF and other charities.

What actions need to happen to make it real?

- Establish quality control – consistency, accredited programme
- Employers need to adhere to Equalities Act (this should be included in training)
- Map of different provisions that employers can promote
- Mental health first aid training for employees
- Liaise with NHS to co-ordinate info pack
- Trained on how to deliver inclusive mental health support
- Promoted by the Council and through business forums

Voting Results

Invalid	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither Support nor Oppose	Support	Strongly Support
0	0	2	0	7	19
0%	0%	7%	0%	25%	68%

3.3 Learning, Advice and Skills support for those who need it most

Learning, Advice, and Skills Support for those who need it most

Recommendation 1 - Physical local building hub that provides tailored support, which meets the diverse needs of the wider community and empowers people to access skills, support and interests which can lead to social inclusion and/or employment.

Why is it important?

- Provides a holistic system that identifies and picks up everyone (high and low status), regardless of personal background, with the intention to address and treat people as belonging to the borough
- Gives confidence and belonging
- Helps to build safer and integrated communities
- And, lots of areas under one roof makes it easier to use and access

Detailed Description

This is a place that:

- Has an open-door policy
- Caters for different groups of people and their needs- including opening times and no need for referrals or sign-ups.
- Hosts a number of organisations under one roof – each with different desks - to further support members of the community – a one stop shop
- Set measurable objectives
- Offers free pre-application courses and training to help people apply for work including tech/digital support.
- There will be more than one of these hubs –spread across the borough, under one umbrella

- Provides role models and connectors for younger people and 1-2-1 support for people with special needs and other groups
- Multidisciplinary with mental/physical support
- Is planned with residents involved alongside actors like DWP who have money, inc. community organisations (resident and external), local businesses and the wider community – all working together
- Has consistent funding, not cuts- bringing together funding from grants, entrepreneurs, and other stakeholders.

Voting Results

Invalid	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither Support nor Oppose	Support	Strongly Support
0	0	0	0	7	21
0%	0%	0%	0%	25%	75%

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Learning, Advice, and Skills Support for those who need it most

Recommendation 2 - Dedicated youth hubs that help young people and employers to take on young people on employment programmes that are paid and advertised well with thorough support, life skills and knowledge that is essential to the progression and to the future of young people in Waltham Forest. This could be face to face and social media/online integration.

Why is it important?

- Employers don't understand the value of apprenticeships and young people
- Lack of life skills taught in schools. i.e., finance, mental health, careers, social health, creativity
- It empowers young people to be who they want and have the potential to be
- If apprenticeships are not well paid, it excludes young people who can't afford such a low wage and demotivates young people
- Inclusive of SENCO needs

Detailed Description

Topics:

- Cooking
- Wellbeing
- P.H.S.E
- Finance
- Careers
- Mental health
- Sex education
- Hygiene
- Families

- Bring in third party organisations for workshops
- Volunteer mentors
- DWP
- Head teachers
- Young people and the community will benefit in Waltham Forest and play a part of it

Voting Results

Invalid	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither Support nor Oppose	Support	Strongly Support
0	0	2	0	4	22
0%	0%	7%	0%	14%	79%

Learning, Advice, and Skills Support for those who need it most

Recommendation 3 - Evaluation of wants and needs for the underrepresented groups by:

- Signposting to relevant organisations
- Follow up to ensure the signposting is a success, by monitoring and evaluating
- Ambassadors from these groups to represent and support them

As highlighted by the 'State of Borough report 2021-2022'.

Why is it important?

- Ensures delivery of goods and services to all members of the community fairly and equally. To meet its objectives and reasons for its existence and all services are held accountable, and all members of the community get adequate support without bias. It is important to have measurable outcomes published in a simple way, in various formats. Such as language, braille, font etc.

Detailed Description

Who will benefit?
- All members of the community, specifically underrepresented groups.

Who needs to be involved?

- Community groups
- Residents (specifically "hard to reach" groups)
- External organisations, such as DWP, local business etc

What actions make it real?

- Must be demonstratable to the communities
- Published
- Evaluated independently, by stakeholders, community and others
- All services MUST be held accountable
- Going into the community
- Continuous open comms and coproduction between users and services
- Feedback of what has changed as a result of the Summit

Voting Results

Invalid	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither Support nor Oppose	Support	Strongly Support
0	0	0	1	7	20
0%	0%	0%	4%	25%	71%

3.4 Creating a Caring and Fair System

Creating a Caring and Fair System

Recommendation 1 – We recommend creating a space where residents, especially those who are marginalised or vulnerable, can access a wide range of services and resources.

Why is it important?

- There is a dire need in the borough for a local, accessible hub where residents can access services, support, career opportunities and more, without being hindered by obstacles or barriers. Vulnerable and marginalised people or communities are often excluded from these services, which is why they and their needs should be centred in the creation of such a hub.

- For example, it would create community cohesion, a fair system and inclusion of older people

Detailed Description

- The hub would act as a base for Council services and VCS

- We need to collate existing support and services as well as creating new ones and place them in an accessible location. All Council services offering career progression as well as VCS should be involved. Digital infrastructure should be invested in to aid those who are unable to reach a physical site. However, analogue alternatives to all parts of the process should be available for those who are digitally excluded. Staff should be well informed about barriers related to disabilities, language barriers, domestic violence, neurodivergence and mental health, chronic illness and poverty that many people face.

- The Council needs to help VCS groups and foodbanks to deliver services for vulnerable individuals (i.e., mental health, disabled, BAME communities)

- However, this would be a pilot that, if successful, would lead to the creation of satellite hubs.

Voting Results

Invalid	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither Support nor Oppose	Support	Strongly Support
0	0	0	0	3	26
0%	0%	0%	0%	10%	90%

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Creating a Caring and Fair System

Recommendation 2 – The Council to change its systems for accessing information and services so that people who are digitally excluded and/or housebound can easily access all Council services.

Why is it important?

- Many people are suffering because they can't access Council information and services online. e.g., pest control, safety alarms for older people, rehousing bids, over 60s parking permits etc

- The Council will be uplifted because it will start or improve to serve some of the people who need its services the most (who are currently excluded).

Detailed Description

Who will benefit?
Older people, disabled people, people who can't afford broadband, smart phone contracts or don't have a laptop or printer.

Tasks to do:

- Identify the barriers to accessing each Council service faced by people not online by working with VCSOs who deal with this every day.

- Develop various options on non-digital access and test these out.

- Train the people who answer the phone to treat people who aren't online with respect and NOT make them feel stupid or a nuisance. Be helpful and print things and post them out.

- Increase the number of people who answer the phone (including in each department). Set a standard for answering the phone within so many rings.

- Amend the system for bidding for Council housing so you don't have to have an email address. Start this with sheltered housing bids.

- Advertise widely the fact that libraries can help people access services and increase staffing in libraries so they can cope.

- Fund a VCSO to do home visits for housebound people not online to enable their access (and change systems so an email address is not required)

- Increase funding for the VCSO and other organisations which are already running IT classes for digitally excluded people

- Provide free laptops for people who can't afford it; get the big companies to provide free or reduced broadband contracts.

- Provide more funding for VCSOs to help with form filling.

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Voting Results

Invalid	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither Support nor Oppose	Support	Strongly Support
0	0	0	0	11	18
0%	0%	0%	0%	38%	62%

Creating a Caring and Fair System

Recommendation 3 – There needs to be a system (with policies in place) that is fair towards hours, leave and makes it easier to raise issues regarding work conditions, across all sectors for marginalised groups- to include the whole community (new and old).
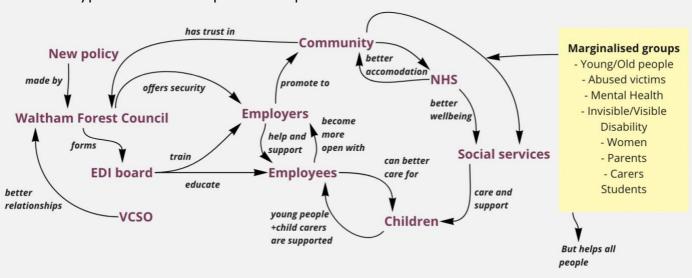
Why is it important?

These policies (combined with the 2010 Equalities Act) will allow employees to be treated fair and equitably. Therefore not making assumptions that everyone benefits from the same support and thus making an improved and positive workforce through case-by-case accommodation.

Detailed Description

When changing policies and introducing this new workplace structure, it HAS to be enforced by the Council. Borough-wide application will be difficult, however once done with workshops/training, being able to say that, as a workplace, you have received the training will increase the efficacy of the hiring process. To complement this, members of the community will need to be educated and made aware of the new policy in place. An EDI board (comprised of people with diverse, lived experience) will help train, enforce, and inform people and implement it in all sectors.
Here's a hypothetical development template*:

*This development template was drawn by participants on their recommendation and reproduced above

Voting Results

Invalid	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither Support nor Oppose	Support	Strongly Support
1*	0	0	0	12	16
3%	0%	0%	0%	41%	55%

* Not readable

Creating a Caring and Fair System

Recommendation 4 – We recommend the Council 'go to' community spaces to engage with people who are prevented from, or unable to leave their homes due to coercion or domestic violence to highlight available services rather than expecting them to 'come to us;' i.e., the Council.

Why is it important?

- This is important as these groups will gain the information and confidence to make decisions to deal with their current circumstances.
- Our hope is that taking the knowledge and services to these groups will empower them to integrate into society with a greater sense of confidence.

Detailed Description

Who will Benefit?

Ultimately, we are trying to encourage and empower these vulnerable groups to be able to overcome their challenges and possibly abusive circumstances.

What actions are needed?

- The Council need to liaise with places such as schools/doctors' surgeries/places of worship/ existing community groups where women (and men) can be given vital information.

Sometimes these are the only places these demographics are allowed to leave home for.

- If the Council find their services are stretched already, they could ask (and fund) already existing community groups to run information workshops in these places.
- People and places to be involved: schools, health facilities like surgeries, places of worship, community groups, local professionals, police liaison/social services to give information.

Voting Results

Invalid	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither Support nor Oppose	Support	Strongly Support
0	0	0	0	10	19
0%	0%	0%	0%	34%	66%

4. Evaluation and Learning

Evaluation and Learning formed an important element of the Summit process.

Members were invited to complete paper surveys prior to beginning the process, and at the end of the final Summit day. These surveys were used to understand Summit members' attitudes towards both the topic and the process, and to determine how these attitudes changed throughout the Summit member journey.

Survey answers were collated and compared, identifying and exploring common themes. Surveys also asked members to identify how they wanted to stay involved, with Waltham Forest Council and also as a group. Summit members were also asked to share their reflections in table discussions.

4.1 Starting survey: how members felt before the Summit

A total of 28 Summit members filled in the starting survey before the Summit began. The results are detailed below.

What Summit members were most looking forward to when taking part in the EDI Making a Living Summit

We asked members what they were most looking forward to about the upcoming Summit.

The opportunity to **learn** was a theme that featured most highly, with 11 members mentioning this. This ranged from learning from others, to learning more about the EDI issues faced by those who live in Waltham Forest.

"The opportunity to meet new people and learn from their experiences and to engage directly with the local authority. I hope that together we can work to a common end for the good of the citizens of our borough"

Another common theme was about the **outcome** of the Summit, referenced by eight members.

"Making change. Seeing the result of the conversations being had"

"Identify clear causes of EDI issues in WF. Clear communication of outcomes. Action plan and regular updates about intervention outcomes"

Meeting **new people** was something seven Summit members commented on, for example the **"potential to network with other in the borough"**.

Feeling a part of the Summit process, sharing their **views** and asserting a **better understanding** of the democratic process was mentioned by eight participants.

Summit members' concerns ahead of taking part

Members were asked if there were any aspects of the upcoming Summit that concerned them. Reponses were collected from 17 members, while 11 members registered that they had no concerns. The main concern for five members was whether the **overall outcome** of the Summit would lead to positive change in the borough.

"The conversations and work put in may not lead to positive change"

"That the recommendations that we put forward will lead to changes taking place within WF"

A few other members commented that they had concerns around **communication**, including feeling worried that they wouldn't be listened by other Summit members or by the Council. One participant felt there might not be enough **time** to cover the topics in depth.

Summit members' hopes for what would result of the process

Members were asked what they hoped the upcoming Summit would result in. The main theme that 22 members hoped for was **change** in the borough and that their recommendations would have **positive outcomes.**

"Positive change"

"I hope Council will collect all the information from this event and will implement the solutions regarding the issues facing community living in the borough"

One member was unsure, and one hoped to **learn** more about engaging with the community.

Participants' level of engagement before the Summit

We asked Summit members which of the following activities they had done before taking part in the Summit.

Activities previously done by participants

82% voted in the last general elections

64% voted in the last Waltham Forest Council elections

64% signed a paper petition or an online/e-petition

79% volunteered or took part in community activities

38% attended a public meeting or rally, took part in a public demonstration or protest

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4.2 Comparison data: what changed between the start and the end of the Summit

This section gives an overview of the changes in views and attitudes from Summit members between the starting survey and the ending survey.

Views on the EDI Summit:

- 97% of Summit members thought the EDI Summit was a good idea after taking part, compared to 93% at the start.
- Slightly more members (69%) thought the EDI Summit would lead to positive change after the Summit compared to 65% before.
- There was a slight decrease in the percentage of Summit members stating that they were happy to take part at the end of the Summit, with 86% being happy to take part overall, compared to 89% before.

Views on Waltham Forest Council:

- Slightly more members thought Waltham Forest Council would act on what comes out of the EDI Summit as a result of the Summit, with 59% agreeing or strongly agreeing to this statement overall compared to 57% at the start.
- There was a slight increase in the percentage of Summit members who felt that they had the ability to influence decisions about how Waltham Forest Council is run, 49% feeling that way overall at the end of the Summit compared to 46% at the start.
- There was a slight decrease in the percentage of Summit members who felt that Waltham Forest Council listens to residents, 45% feeling that way after the Summit compared to 50% before.
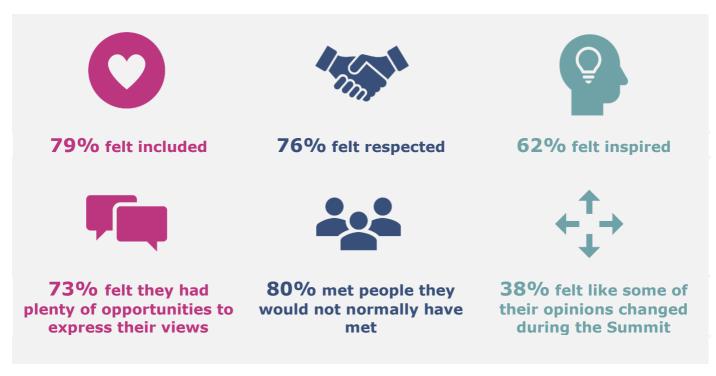
Participants' level of confidence remained the same overall with 82% feeling confident to put their views forward, but a slightly higher percentage of participants (48%) strongly agreed to the statement after taking part (34% before).

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4.3 Ending survey: how Summit members felt at the end

After the final Summit we asked members to fill in a final questionnaire, which 29 out of 32 members completed. Results are shown below.

How participants felt during the Summit

79% felt included

76% felt respected

62% felt inspired

73% felt they had plenty of opportunities to express their views

80% met people they would not normally have met

38% felt like some of their opinions changed during the Summit

Note: For the first row (feeling included, respected, and inspired), the sliding scale of 'Strongly Agree' to 'Strongly Disagree' was presented in the opposite order as the previous question, therefore those results might be slightly underestimated. This was apparent on some surveys where participants' comments and ratings were contradictory and on other surveys where participants had ticked 'Strongly Disagree', then crossed it and ticked 'Strongly Agree' instead. However, it appears to have only affected a small number of responses.
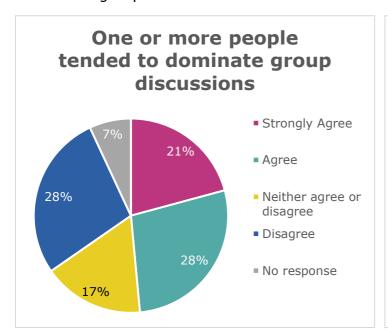
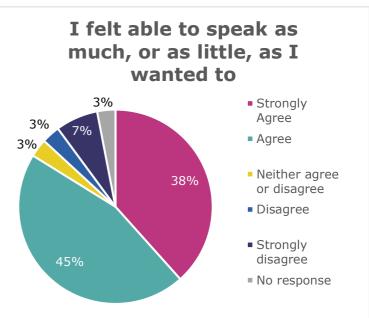**How participants found different parts of the process**

Participants were asked to rate different parts of the process. The results are shown below with some selected charts to illustrate how participants felt in more detail.

41

Breakout sessions

The majority of participants (83%) felt able to speak as much or as little as they wanted and 79% felt comfortable being themselves in the group. Most participants (62%) strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement 'Facilitators sometimes tried to influence the group with their own ideas'.
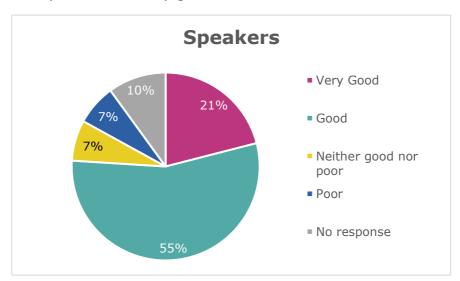
A few participants (7%) said they didn't always feel free to raise their views for fear of others' reaction with a majority (69%) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this statement. Meanwhile, just under half of participants (49%) felt that one or more people tended to dominate group discussions.
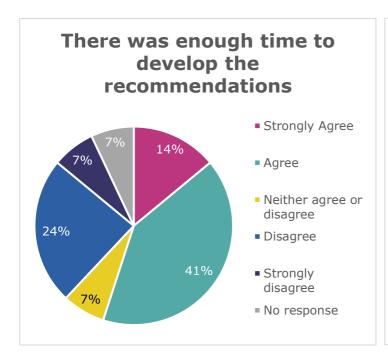
One or more people tended to dominate group discussions

- Strongly Agree — 21%
- Agree — 28%
- Neither agree or disagree — 17%
- Disagree — 28%
- No response — 7%

I felt able to speak as much, or as little, as I wanted to

- Strongly Agree — 38%
- Agree — 45%
- Neither agree or disagree — 3%
- Disagree — 3%
- Strongly disagree — 7%
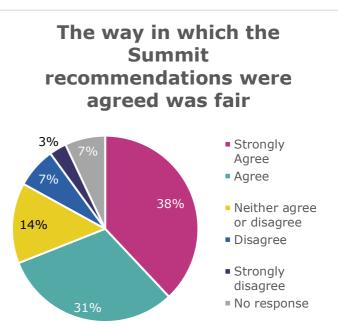- No response — 3%

Delivery of the Summit

The majority of participants (82% and 83% respectively) said that group facilitation and instructions from facilitators were 'Very good' or 'Good'. As many as 62% of participants said that the support team was 'Very good' with an overall approval of 86%. Most participants (76%) also rated the speakers as 'Very good' or 'Good'.

Speakers

- Very Good — 21%
- Good — 55%
- Neither good nor poor — 7%
- Poor — 7%
- No response — 10%

Writing the recommendations

A total of 69% of Summit members felt that the way in which the recommendations were agreed was fair and 62% felt that they were able to influence the recommendations. For 55% of Summit members, they had enough time to participate effectively and make recommendations, and there was enough time to develop the recommendations. However, 24% of participants disagreed with the latter statement. A small majority of 52% said they understood how their recommendations will be used.

There was enough time to develop the recommendations

- Strongly Agree — 14%
- Agree — 41%
- Neither agree or disagree — 7%
- Disagree — 24%
- Strongly disagree — 7%
- No response — 7%

The way in which the Summit recommendations were agreed was fair

- Strongly Agree — 38%
- Agree — 31%
- Neither agree or disagree — 14%
- Disagree — 7%
- Strongly disagree — 3%
- No response — 7%

Communications about the Summit

BEFORE

80% thought the communications received before the Summit were very good or good

DURING

86% thought the communications received on the Summit days were very good or good

IN BETWEEN

76% thought the communications received between the Summit days were very good or good

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What Summit members enjoyed most about taking part in the EDI Making a Living Summit

We asked members what they enjoyed most about taking part in the Summit and received comments from 27 members.

Meeting new people was the main theme with 17 members commenting on this.

> **"Meeting people across all communities who are keen to talk about shortfalls and are willing to suggest ways for changes"**
>
> **"Meeting different members of the community from all walks of life - and working together to create solutions"**

Another theme was that six members enjoyed **being part of the process.** They commented on feeling that they had a **voice** and a chance to **share ideas** throughout the Summit.

> **"Able to share and discuss ideas and put them forward to formulate a plan to present to the Council"**
>
> **"Having the opportunity to speak to speakers, networking, and have genuine conversations about problems in the wider borough"**

Learning from others and learning about other organisations working in the borough was enjoyed and mentioned by five Summit members.

Summit members' concerns after taking part

In total, 14 members had no concerns about the process while 13 had some concerns. The main theme were the **outcomes** from the Summit and if the Summit would have an **impact.**

> **"The only thing that concerns me is that this is an exercise 'on paper' only?"**
>
> **"Whether recommendations will be implemented by Council?"**

Four members had concerns about the **Summit process**. This ranged from feeling like there wasn't enough **time** to process big ideas to members wanting more interaction with Councillors.

> **"I think things got side-tracked often and a lot of people had very fixed mindsets about what they wanted"**

The venue and acoustics were a concern for a few members.

Inclusion

We asked members if there were any issues or barriers that prevented them from taking part or made them feel unsafe or unwelcome. The venue was mentioned as a barrier by three Summit members:

"I couldn't hear what people were saying a lot of the time. The acoustics were terrible. It is very hard for someone with a hearing impairment to hear when there is so much background noise*"

Sharing ideas was another theme with four members commenting that they didn't feel listened to by other Summit members.

We also asked if there was anything we did that was particularly important for helping them feel welcome. Comments were added by 23 members on the process, specifically the delivery team who ensured members felt **welcomed.**

"The hospitality and friendly approach"

"I liked how staff were open to speaking to you, getting to know you as a resident, or support worker in the community. This made it a welcoming environment"

Two members described the process as feeling **inclusive** and one member commented that they appreciated the quiet room.

Suggestions

The last question was about suggestions for how a Summit like this could be improved in the future. There were 11 comments related to different parts of the **process.** These included members feeling that not all **topics** related to EDI could be covered in the time frame and that there should have been more clarity on the **scope** of the themes.

Making sure that the recommendations are implemented was the main suggestion from six members:

"It is important to see something done as quick as possible"

"It is essential that there is a follow-up in the winter Nov/Dec (avoid summer due to holidays) to see how/if the Council has signed up to the recommendations and acted on them

There were three comments suggesting a more suitable venue for future Summits. Two members commented that the Summit should include those who are housebound and those who don't speak English.

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* This was addressed after day one, with the introduction of two more breakout rooms to improve acoustics. Hearing loops were also available but not requested by participants.

5. Conclusion

As a process, the Waltham Forest EDI Making a Living Summit was the first of its kind in the UK. The range of recommendations shows that, when given the opportunity to deliberate with a broader group of people, with access to insight and information for discussion together in safe conditions, people from community groups and organisations can find solutions to some of society's most pressing challenges and produce detailed recommendations about a way forward.

Summit members were able to have constructive and informed debate with a broad range of participants; to explore the issues together, to consider the trade-offs and hear other perspectives. Results of the Summit, along with the feedback from participants, demonstrate how deeply they approach issues and how important it is for the Council to give opportunities of this nature to the community.

The recommendations are available for consideration by policymakers, and anyone interested in the topic of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion and specifically on how everyone can be supported to make a good living.

5.1 Next steps

A response to the recommendations was given by Cllr Ahsan Khan and Cllr Vicky te Velde immediately after they were presented on the final day of the Summit.

The Council will carefully consider in depth how the recommendations can be used to inform decision-making about tackling this issue in the borough. A further response will be given through the publication of the EDI Making a Living Strategy, which is to be published in July 2022.

Having presented their recommendations on day three of the Summit, the next steps from here for Summit members are:

Late May – Summit participants invited to review the draft Strategy and short-term action plan.

July – Volunteers from the Summit will present (in-person) the recommendations report to a meeting of Waltham Forest Council's Cabinet

July – Waltham Forest Council's EDI Making a Living Strategy is published, with a short-term action plan demonstrating the commitment of the Council and underpinning the Strategy.

August – Summit participants invited to review the Council's full action plan. Opportunities to work with specific Council services to design and improve processes and services will open.

September – A detailed and fully costed long-term action plan detailing the Council's response to the Summit members' recommendations and how these will be taken forward.

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6. Appendices

6.1 Appendix 1. Conversation Guidelines

- Giving people a safe space to talk and ask questions
- Giving equal space for everybody, including gentle encouragement
- Willingness and openness to learn from shared and diverse experiences
- Being non-judgemental respecting boundaries
- Be mindful of others' emotions and give people time to think and express themselves
- Stay on topic
- Speak loudly
- Actively listen to what others are saying
- No jargon
- Phones on silent/vibrate

Plus, our starter for 10 suggestions:
- No question is a bad question
- Agree to disagree, address the point not the person
- Be open to change
- Step forward, step back

6.2 Appendix 2. Refined and developed ideas

From day two, a list of 30 ideas which have been discussed with 'testing partners' and then refined by Summit members prior to the dotmocracy voting exercise.

Refined and Developed Ideas	

1. Building inclusive workplaces	
Idea 1: Sufficient data collection from anonymised applications and reach out to minority employee networks to establish outcome.	**Idea 2:** Applicants able to pick up hard copy via library or Council officer or ask for application form to be posted. Jobs can be posted on 'Next Door' App for those with S/M ability.
Idea 3: Accessibility for adverts as well as digital paper adverts. Council newspaper reaches every household. Tailor application closing dates in line with publication.	**Idea 4:** More and better long-term funding for organisations that are already doing great work to enhance reach and impact.
Idea 5: Facilitating flexible working: • Identify roles needed on site (mandatory) • Hybrid working (agile) • Home working (with some office visits)	**Idea 6:** Reasonable Adjustment Passports (RAPs)
Idea 7: Council to create links with existing companies/bodies to identify training to be delivered to organisations about being able to understand the differences that may arise with the subgroups.	**Idea 8:** Consultation with all staff to get their input for an all-inclusive workplace. To include future proofing acoustics, lighting, heating, accessibility, braille, tri-gender toilets M/F/Unisex.

2. Developing good quality jobs for all	
Idea 1: Council-funded mental health training for local employers, developed in partnership with mental health services, including e.g. info packs for all employers, language around rejection, enabling people to work from home.	**Idea 2:** Mapping and coordination of internships, apprenticeships, enterprise programmes across the borough for all people. Creation of new programmes to fill gaps
Idea 3: Affordable and accessible community start-ups and pop-up workspaces, taking into account those who are digitally excluded and talk to customers.	**Idea 4.** Targeted employment support programmes tailored to different needs. (E.G For older people back into work, young people etc.)

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Idea 5.	**Idea 6.**
Programme for recruiters and employers to create fairer recruitment processes that eliminate bias.	Improve travel/transport accessibility and affordability so that more employees can access jobs in the borough and more customers come to local businesses (which will lead to more sales, growth and employment opportunities).

3. Learning, advice, and skills support for those who need it most

Idea 1:	**Idea 2:**
Target recruitment drive under a one-stop-shop by local employers for specified groups of local residents: • Induction days • Signups	Employment, advice skills hub in the borough for everyone. Open door policy. Catering for different groups of people and their needs. Such as opening times, no referral for sign-ups etc. Have many target areas under one roof. One stop shop. Different desks for different areas. Many hubs under one umbrella. Invite organisations to further support members of the community.
Idea 3:	**Idea 4:**
Tailored and practical work placements that are sensitive and complementary to their current needs and capabilities with a clear path to permanent employment afterwards.	Evaluation of the wants and needs for underrepresented groups: • Signposting to the relevant organisations • Follow up to ensure the signposting is a success. Monitor and evaluate • Ambassadors from these groups to represent and support.
Idea 5:	**Idea 6:**
Free pre-application courses and training to help people apply for work – including[*] tech/digital support.	Educating employers and young people on employment programmes that are paid and advertised well with thorough support (in the hub)
Idea 7:	**Idea 8:**
Because of the lack of effective P.S.H.E in schools, a youth hub that provides life skill knowledge would be essential to the progression to the future of young people in Waltham Forest.	Gateway centres (physical places) that are one-stop-shops to receive career and benefits advice and be signposted to other support and career opportunities.

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[*] *Original post-it note reads inducing but is probably a typo*

4. Creating a caring and fair system

Idea 1:
A system that is lenient with hours and leave that allow young people, pregnant woman, abuse victims, disabled people and other to take time off specific hours without fear. However, polices need to be put in place so that they're not abused.

Idea 2:
Council to do a full review of the discrimination against people who are not online in accessing Council services. (Includes gathering data/research on how many people are not online, and the barriers they face in accessing Council services). Council to develop various options on access and test these out. Council to fund and implement non digital access for Council service:
- Answer the Council phone within 'x' rings
- Create options for applications for housing/bidding for rehoming etc
- Advertise widely the availability of libraries for accessing Council services and resource them better
- Fund a VCSO to support people not online to access pensions

Idea 3:
Implementation of free or subsidised out of hours childcare. i.e., Shift workers:
- Nurses
- Doctors
- Security Guards
- Hospitality staff

Idea 4:
Offer a space to support individuals who are vulnerable and looking for a job/career change, seeking to upskill/training/coaching. Or help those wanting to access specific services (I.E, foodbank, mental health, employment, and advice).

Idea 5:
More research is needed to confirm the effect of UBI and create a strong case for implementing it.

Idea 6:
Create a central 'family hub' pilot in an area with the highest employment rates in the borough where all can access various services according to their needs with a focus on the most vulnerable and marginalised (see state of borough report).
Support and advice for all:
- Culturally adopted approach to support certain groups
- Peer support groups.

Idea 7:
Benefit coaches should be able to lift sanctions using a holistic approach so more in need are not penalised (i.e., those who are seeking employment)

Idea 8:
There is a dire need in the borough for local, accessible hub where residents can access services, support, career opportunities and more, without being hindered by obstacles/barriers/ Vulnerable and marginalised people/communities are often excluded from these services which is why they and their needs should be central to the creation of such a hub.

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Waltham Forest Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Making a Living Summit, Recommendations Report, Democratic Society, April 2022.

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