

Classification: Public

Key Decision: No

Gravesham Borough Council

Report to: Full Council
Date: 23 February 2021
Reporting officer: Chief Executive
Subject: Equality Policy 2021-24

Purpose and summary of report:

To present the draft Equality Policy including objectives and action plan for 2021-24

Recommendations:

1. For Council to adopt the Equality Policy including objectives and action plan

1. Introduction

1.1 The Council has a duty under the Equalities Act 2010 to legally protect people from discrimination in the workplace and wider society. This includes the Public Sector Equality Duty which specifically sets out a requirement to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

And to publish Equality Objectives at least every four years.

1.2 Following a review of the Council's 2016-20 equalities objectives, an Equalities Officer Working Group was established to draft a new Equality Policy, setting out how the Council will deliver its equalities ambitions to meet the legal duties, to review the equality objectives and develop an action plan setting out key areas of focus. This work has been guided by the Equality Framework for Local Government 2020 and examples of good practice by council's from across the country. The draft policy is attached at Appendix II of this report.

- 1.3 The draft Policy was presented to the Community & Leisure Cabinet Committee on 2 February 2021 where Members were asked to comment and recommend adoption at Full Council.
- 1.4 Following the Cabinet Committee, a request was made to further develop the work to ensure strategies and policies are inclusive and progressively address identified equality issues in areas such as training, recruitment and working practices for all staff and Members. This amendment has been incorporated in the action plan #2

2. Conclusion

- 2.1 This policy provides a clear commitment to achieving equality of opportunity in all of our activities including in the delivery of services to the community, as an employer and as a community leader

3. BACKGROUND PAPERS/ APPENDICES

- 3.1 Minutes of the Community & Leisure Cabinet Committee 2 February 2021

IMPLICATIONS	APPENDIX 1
Legal	The council has a legal duty to prepare and publish one or more equality objectives to achieve the aims of the Equality Duty
Finance and Value for Money	There are no financial implications in relation to this report
Risk Assessment	A failure to meet the duty to ensure compliance could lead to the council being reported to the Equalities and Human Rights Commission, damage to the reputation of the council and the potential to impact on community tensions.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	<i>A data protection impact assessment (DPIA) should be carried out at the start of any major project involving the use of personal data or if you are making a significant change to an existing process.</i>
	<p>a. Does the project/change being recommended through this paper involve the processing of personal data or special category data or criminal offence data? A definition of each type of data can be found on the Information Commissioner's Office website via the above links.</p>
	<p>b. If yes to question a, have you completed and attached a DPIA including Data Protection Officer advice?</p>
	<p>c. If no to question b, please seek advice from your nominated DPIA assessor or the Information Governance Team at gdpr@medway.gov.uk.</p>
Equality Impact Assessment	<p>a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community? If yes, please explain answer. No</p>
	<p>b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality? If yes, please explain answer. Yes the purpose of the Equality Policy and Objectives is to enable the council to fulfil its legal obligations under the Equality Duty to tackle discrimination and promote equality</p>
	<i>In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above</i>
Corporate Plan	<p>This policy supports the Corporate Plan objectives #1 People: a proud community; where residents can call a safe, clean and attractive borough their home #3 Progress: an entrepreneurial authority; commercial in outlook and committed to continuous service improvement, underpinned by a skilled workforce and strong governance environment.</p>
Climate Change	There are no direct impacts
Crime and Disorder	Promotion of equalities supports better relationships and therefore has potential to reduce crime and disorder e.g. hate crime

Digital and website implications	There are no digital implications.
Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults	Promoting equalities positively assists