

URN: 21-190

Subject: Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy & Action Plan

Report to: Policy & Resources Committee, 30 November 2021

Report by: Paula Boyce, Strategic Director & Sarah Tate, Head of Organisational Development

SUBJECT MATTER – This report presents the Council’s draft Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy for members’ consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

That committee:

1. Review, comment, and approve the draft Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy, and its Equality Action Plan for consultation
2. Delegate authority to the Head of Organisational Development to make any amendments to the strategy following consultation

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Equality Act 2010, which introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), aims to protect people from discrimination. The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 requires local authorities to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the PSED and to publish equality objectives. The PSED requires public organisations, including Councils to have ‘due regard’ to how they can make things better for people from different groups. This includes:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

1.2 Great Yarmouth Borough Council’s Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy sets out the Council’s commitment to equality and inclusion within the community of Great Yarmouth and its workforce. It describes how we work within the borough of Great Yarmouth as a place where equality is at the forefront of council services and we support opportunities for and the experiences of everybody in our communities. It outlines what we will do to make Great Yarmouth a place where people of different backgrounds can thrive, get on well together, embrace diversity and celebrate inclusivity.

- 1.3 The Strategy has been informed through previous equality strategies and associated action plans. In doing so, it sets out our priorities in relation to the nine protected characteristics.
- 1.4 Looking to best practice in our sector, the Council has refreshed its Equality Priorities set out in an Equality Action Plan. It follows the structure of the Local Government Association's Equality Framework for Local Government 2020. In doing so this enables us to monitor impact, benchmark and measure our progress across the years. The Equality Framework for Local Government is intended to help Councils:
- Deliver accessible and responsive services to customers and residents in their communities including those from protected characteristics.
 - Employ a workforce that reflects the diversity of the area they are serving.
 - Provide equality of opportunity for all staff.
 - Meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 1.5 The Borough Council is committed to delivering meaningful and lasting improvements for local people, by adopting and developing good equality and inclusion practice. We aim to create a place where people treat each other with dignity and respect. Also essential to this is ensuring the Council employs the best people to deliver this who are well-informed and culturally aware of the communities they serve.
- 1.6 The Strategy has been welcomed and supported by the Joint Consultative Working Group where members were encouraged to be bold within our Strategy and its Equalities Action Plan.

2. FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 The Strategy and Equalities Action Plan ensure compliance with our legal duties but goes further than that in supporting the continued embedding of a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- 2.2 There are no direct financial implications to the adoption of this Strategy or Equality Priorities set-out in the Equalities Action Plan. Actions set-out can be undertaken within existing resources.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The Strategy outlines the Council's commitment to continue to promote equality, diversity and inclusion in everything we do. The Strategy delivers long term, continuous improvement and with a 'live' Action Plan to help guide our journey.

| Area for consideration | Comment |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Monitoring Officer Consultation: | Considered |
| Section 151 Officer Consultation: | Considered |
| Existing Council Policies: | Considered |

| | |
|---|------------|
| Financial Implications: | Considered |
| Legal Implications (including human rights) | Considered |
| Risk Implications: | Considered |
| Equality Issues/EIA: | Completed |
| Crime & Disorder: | N/A |
| Every Child Matters: | N/A |



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy

November 2021 – 2023

1. Introduction

Great Yarmouth Borough Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy sets out the Council's commitment and priorities to further equality and inclusion within the community of Great Yarmouth and its workforce.

Together with the accompanying Equality Action Plan (EAP), it describes what the Council will do to remove and reduce barriers that may prevent some people from fully participating in the social, cultural, political and economic life of the borough. We want Great Yarmouth to be a borough that is fair and sustainable, ambitious, fun and creative for all.

2. Commitment

The Borough Council is committed to delivering meaningful and lasting improvements for local people, by adopting and developing good equality and inclusion practice. We aim to create a place where people treat each other with dignity and respect. Also essential to this is ensuring the Council employs the best people to deliver this who are well-informed and culturally aware of the communities they serve. This Strategy and Equality Action Plan, informed by previous equality strategies and associated equality action plans, is a commitment and a route map of how the Borough Council will ensure equality is at the forefront of council services.

It sets out what the Council will do to support Great Yarmouth be a place where people of different backgrounds can thrive, get on well together, embrace diversity and celebrate inclusion for all including those people within the nine legally protected characteristics (Appendix 1).

Since the Equality Act was introduced in 2010, over the past eleven years Great Yarmouth Borough Council has met its general and specific requirements of the legislation. This Strategy and EAP builds upon that work moving equality, diversity and inclusion up the agenda of the Council.

The Strategy is about long term, continuous improvement, and for this reason the Council recognises that delivery of excellent public services, with a strong focus on customer access and service, will ensure that local people and communities are at the centre of everything we do.

3. Intent

Great Yarmouth Borough Council will promote equality and inclusion in everything it does. Whether this is providing services, employing people, developing policies, communicating, consulting, involving people in our activities or supporting our multicultural communities. As a public body, we have both a legal and moral duty to promote equality, diversity and inclusion amongst residents, service users

and our own employees. As one of the biggest employers in Great Yarmouth, it is important that we lead by example and make the Council the best employer it can be.

As an organisation we are committed to equality, diversity & inclusion, valuing and recognising our differences, but we appreciate there is a lot more we should be doing. The Council will:

- Consider equality and inclusion in our investment plans, strategies and corporate policies
- Raise awareness and celebrating diversity including cultural differences.

4. Focusing on the right priorities for Great Yarmouth

This is an ambitious strategy, and Year 1 of the action plan is primarily focused around gathering community and workforce intelligence and putting in place key building blocks regarding performance and governance requirements.

In view of this, at the end of delivery of Year 1, a detailed progress review report will be brought to the Policy and Resources Committee for consideration, setting out the emerging findings and evidence, and proposing any necessary changes to the strategy, to ensure that the Council is well placed to prioritise the most significant issues for the authority and the community it serves.

Equality

Equality is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents.

It is also the belief that no one should have reduced life chances because of the way they were born, where they come from or whether they have a disability.

Diversity

Diversity is about understanding that everyone is unique, recognising, respecting and celebrating the added value that these differences bring.

Inclusion

Inclusion is about an individual's experience within the workplace and in wider society and, the extent to which they feel valued and included. Successful and lasting inclusion involves a shared vision, values and a sense of belonging for all communities.

We recognise the importance of ensuring that the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion inform key decision making at every level within the Council and that this strategy and its Action Plan is a living document to guide our journey. The Council recognises the importance of being able to live in an equal society that recognises different people's different needs, situations and goals, and removes barriers that limit what people can do and can be.

5. Our Vision and Values

Great Yarmouth Borough Council aims to deliver excellent services through a strong focus on customer access and service and making sure local people and communities are at the heart of all policies, procedures, functions and services.

Our Vision and priorities are set within the Corporate Plan 2020-2025 ([The Plan](#)).

Our Vision:

To have a vibrant economy, capitalising on the investment in clean energy alongside further investment in our place and our visitor economy; creating a quality environment for all and improving the life chances of all those living and working in our borough.



The Council will achieve this by driving and facilitating change in four strategic priority areas:

- A strong and growing economy
- Improved housing and strong communities
- High-quality and sustainable environment
- An efficient and effective council

The Council is committed to delivering meaningful and lasting improvements for local people, by adopting and developing good equality, diversity and inclusion practice and demonstrating high levels of corporate and social responsibility.

Our Values:

Our work is underpinned by our values of honesty, professional, teamwork, positivity and people focused, which are embedded in all aspects of service delivery and partnership working.



We have a strategic priority as ‘an efficient and effective council’ to meet our equalities responsibilities by ensuring that equality sits at the heart of our decision-making:

- We take pride in our work and our borough and are ambitious for the future.
- We listen to our customers and are focused on delivering excellent services.
- We work together positively as a council and in partnership with others.

6. Our Data Story

To support us in making informed decisions it is important that we understand the people we serve and their experiences. Great Yarmouth has a population of 99,198 with a slightly larger population of females (50.6%) compared to males (49.4%). The age, ethnicity, religious belief and disability of the resident population are shown below taken from Public Health’s Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and ONS Census Data (some 2011 and some 2020 date sets) available via [Norfolk Insight](#):

| Date: 2020 Source: ONS | | | | | | |
|------------------------|----------------|------|---------|------|------------|------|
| | Great Yarmouth | | Norfolk | | England | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Persons aged 0 - 17 | 19,759 | 19.9 | 172,182 | 18.8 | 12,093,288 | 21.4 |
| Persons aged 18 - 64 | 54,887 | 55.3 | 516,514 | 56.5 | 33,992,831 | 60.1 |
| Persons aged 65+ | 24,552 | 24.8 | 225,343 | 24.7 | 10,464,019 | 18.5 |

| Source: ONS Census 2011 | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|------|---------|------|------------|------|
| | Great Yarmouth | | Norfolk | | England | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Asian/Asian British | 1,204 | 1.2 | 13,017 | 1.5 | 4,143,403 | 7.8 |
| Black/African/Caribbean/Black British | 439 | 0.5 | 4,609 | 0.5 | 1,846,614 | 3.5 |
| Mixed/multiple ethnic groups | 1,159 | 1.2 | 10,027 | 1.2 | 1,192,879 | 2.3 |
| Other ethnic group | 260 | 0.3 | 2,217 | 0.3 | 548,418 | 1 |
| White | 94,215 | 96.9 | 828,018 | 96.5 | 45,281,142 | 85.4 |

Ethnic group classifies people according to their own perceived ethnic group and cultural background.

| Source: ONS Census 2011 | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|------|---------|------|------------|------|
| | Great Yarmouth | | Norfolk | | England | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Buddhist | 237 | 0.2 | 2,901 | 0.3 | 238,626 | 0.5 |
| Christian | 59,383 | 61 | 523,163 | 61 | 31,479,876 | 59.4 |
| Hindu | 255 | 0.3 | 2,295 | 0.3 | 806,199 | 1.5 |
| Jewish | 108 | 0.1 | 983 | 0.1 | 261,282 | 0.5 |
| Muslim | 518 | 0.5 | 5,021 | 0.6 | 2,660,116 | 5 |
| Sikh | 6 | 0 | 461 | 0.1 | 420,196 | 0.8 |
| Other religion | 328 | 0.3 | 3,933 | 0.5 | 227,825 | 0.4 |
| No religion | 29,430 | 30.3 | 254,240 | 29.6 | 13,114,232 | 24.7 |

| Source: ONS Census 2011 | | | | | | |
|--|----------------|------|---------|------|------------|------|
| | Great Yarmouth | | Norfolk | | England | |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| Day-to-day activities limited a lot | 10,578 | 10.9 | 77,696 | 9.1 | 4,405,394 | 8.3 |
| Day-to-day activities limited a little | 11,274 | 11.6 | 94,735 | 11 | 4,947,192 | 9.3 |
| Day-to-day activities not limited | 75,425 | 77.5 | 685,457 | 79.9 | 43,659,870 | 82.4 |

There are stark and varied challenges that we know exist across our estates, neighbourhoods, towns and villages. These vary from fuel poverty and rural isolation, to obesity and low life expectancy, through to low skills and high unemployment.

Great Yarmouth is one of the 20% most deprived local authorities in England. Of Great Yarmouth's 61 neighbourhoods (LSOAs), 15 of them are ranked within the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods on the English Indices of Multiple Deprivation. 9 of these are ranked within the most deprived 3% of neighbourhoods, 4 in most deprived 2% and 3 ranked in most deprived 1% of neighbourhoods in the country. These LSOAs are mostly urban, situated within the following wards: East Flegg, Yarmouth North, Central and Northgate, Nelson, Southtown and Cobholm, Claydon, St. Andrews, and Magdalen.

Great Yarmouth also has a strong sense of community. Our estates, neighbourhoods and villages are full of people who provide the connections that make their neighbourhood stronger. People thrive in communities that are well connected, and when people come together to address the things they care about, they become more resilient. As a Borough Council we understand this and have actively invested in community development work for over 20 years, creating the conditions for people to work collectively to identify their own needs, take collective action, develop their own skills, and bring about positive social change. Through this work we have supported the growth of a thriving VCSE sector, with over 200 community groups and voluntary organisations helped to start up, develop, operate community assets, and successfully make a positive local impact.

As an employer and community leader, our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy re-commits Great Yarmouth Borough Council to ensure that there is no unjustified discrimination in the recruitment, retention, training and development of staff on the basis of any of the protected characteristics.

As an employer Great Yarmouth Borough Council is committed to:

- Understanding, valuing and working constructively with diversity to enable fair and full participation in our work and activities.
- Ensuring that there is no unjustified discrimination in our recruitment, selection, performance management and other processes.
- Ensuring action that promotes equality; this includes conducting equality screening and impact assessments of policies and functions and progressing diversity action plans.
- Treating individuals with whom we work with fairness, dignity and respect.
- Playing our part in removing barriers and redressing imbalances caused by inequality and unjustified discrimination.

All staff are required to ensure their behaviour is consistent with this Strategy. The Council requires that residents as service users, partners and suppliers be made aware of this Strategy and operate within it.

Great Yarmouth Borough Council will review this Strategy at least every three years to help ensure it reflects good practice and new legal and regulatory developments.

7. The Law

The Equality Act 2010, which introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), aims to protect people from discrimination. The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 requires local authorities to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the PSED and to publish equality objectives.

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is protected from discrimination (Appendix 1):

- when they are in the workplace
- when they use public services like healthcare or education
- when they use businesses and other organisations that provide services and goods
- when they use transport
- when they join a club or association
- when they have contact with public bodies like their local council or government departments

The Equality Act 2010 covers nine protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation which cannot be used as a reason to treat people unfairly. Every person has one or more protected characteristic, so the Equality Act 2010 protects everyone against unfair treatment. This applies whether the discrimination is actual or perceived and if it occurs directly or by association. The details of these protected characteristics and forms of discrimination are summarised in Appendix 1.

The PSED includes a general duty which is supported by specific duties. The general duty requires public organisations, including Councils to think about how they can make things better for people from different groups. This includes having due regard to the following:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Council aims to meet its Public Sector Equality Duty by:

- Ensuring our staff, service users and residents receive fair and respectful treatment and are not subject to discrimination or harassment. This includes removing or minimising any disadvantage that people may experience due to their protected characteristic(s).
- Taking action where the needs of people with certain protected characteristics are different from other people's needs and encouraging them to take a greater part in public life and activities where this is disproportionately low.
- Publish relevant and proportionate equalities information, and set ourselves specific, measurable equality objectives at least every five years. Our broad goals are as set out in this Strategy and its associated Action Plan will be published on our website.
- Paying due regard and considering equality impacts before we make decisions affecting residents, service users or employees. This may be demonstrated through an Equality Impact Assessment or other activities and assessments.
- Publishing our gender pay gap reports by each reporting period.
- Monitoring and assessing the impact of our decisions and actions, and whether they are actually reducing levels of inequality.
- Working with communities, partners and agencies across the Borough to promote good relations, and where there is discrimination, challenge it.

This Strategy covers access to and provision of services and recruitment and employment practices specific to Great Yarmouth Borough Council. We have responsibilities as an employer to ensure that people with protected characteristics are not discriminated against when seeking employment with

us, while working for us or when taking part in work-related activities. It also applies to our suppliers or anyone working on behalf of the Council.

8. Our Priority Equality Objectives

To comply with the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty does not take our Council far enough on this journey. We have a diverse population which expects the Borough Council to show community leadership and being bold and ambitious is part of that. Looking to best practice in our sector, we have refreshed our Equality Priorities set out in an Equality Action Plan (EAP) for 2021 to 2023 in Appendix 2. It follows the structure of the Local Government Association's *Equality Framework for Local Government 2020*. In doing so this enables us to monitor impact, benchmark and measure our progress across the years.

The Equality Framework for Local Government is intended to help Councils:

- Deliver accessible and responsive services to customers and residents in their communities including those from protected characteristics.
- Employ a workforce that reflects the diversity of the area they are serving.
- Provide equality of opportunity for all staff.
- Meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Our Equality Action Plan serves to provide an inclusive and not exclusive framework for achieving these Equality Priorities. This EAP will be monitored quarterly by the Executive Leadership Team with progress reported to the Policy and Resource Committee on an annual basis. We will publish our equalities information on our website at least annually to evidence our progress.

Great Yarmouth's Equality Priorities (2021-2023):

1. Understanding and Supporting our Communities
2. Leadership, Partnership and Organisational Commitment
3. Responsive Services and Customer Care
4. Diverse and Engaged Workforce

The Equalities Action Plan is provided in Appendix 2

9. Our Commitment to Equality

Empowering all individuals to be who they are is at the heart of this Strategy. If we forget the people behind an equalities issue, we will fail to meet their needs in the best and most inclusive way. But we also believe in recognising and celebrating all the good work that is helping to build and maintain strong relationships between people of different backgrounds, skills and experiences within our workplaces and communities.

We want to show how equality, diversity and inclusion matters and the difference it makes to people; for people to be feel welcome, to celebrate our differences and be able to actively contribute to our wider society. Improving our knowledge of communities, groups and networks and publicising local initiatives and activities will send a strong message that equality underpins everything we do.

Working with our communities and partners

Great Yarmouth Borough Council will:

- Ensure contractors, suppliers, advisors and partners including those in the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector are able to work and deliver services free from harassment and discrimination.
- Work with other public sector bodies to share knowledge of equalities issues and develop best practice.
- Continue to work with partners to increase the confidence of residents.

Decision-making and developing policies

Great Yarmouth Borough Council will:

- Assess the potential impact on customers and communities of its policies and practices and take action to improve them as required.
- Involve customers and communities in decision-making through impact assessments and engagement with local community groups.
- Ensure access to decision making considers the needs of working people, people with caring responsibilities, young and older people (venues, time, support and formats).
- Involve and engage disabled people to ensure that we design, plan and provide services to enable them to have more control over their own lives.
- Work towards ensuring that all the protected characteristics are fully represented in any consultation undertaken.
- Provide services for young people, and older people to meet their particular needs including the provision of targeted services for specific groups where appropriate e.g., youth groups.
- Support and encourage initiatives which are set up and run by community groups and which promote social inclusion and equality of opportunity.

Access to services

Great Yarmouth Borough Council will:

- Ensure our digital offer, which includes our website, and our digital technologies are fully accessible in accordance with the [Public Sector Bodies \(Websites and Mobile Applications\) \(No. 2\) Accessibility Regulations 2018](#)
- This includes ensuring that text is as simple as possible to understand and provides an online feedback mechanism so we can respond to improve our online offer.
- Ensure that all our residents can contact us regardless of their ability, disability or literacy skills. This includes ensuring that our telephone, letter and email formats enable customers to access the information they require easily and in clear understandable language.
- Monitor user data with specific awareness of the protected characteristic categories to ensure our online and other services provide equality of access. In line with GDPR, we will use data to ensure services are appropriate to the needs of the whole community.
- Make available online and in hardcopy where relevant, leaflets, information posters, guidance notes and support packages in other languages and in large print for those with a visual impairment.

- Ensure all information, publicity and advertising that the Council has control of and/or influences uses positive images and language to counteract the effects of inequality and discrimination and thereby promotes equality for all.

Employment practices

Great Yarmouth Borough Council considers equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of employment, from advertising vacancies, recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of employment, training and personal development to reasons for terminating employment.

The Council:

- Advertises jobs in ways that reach all communities and target groups that are currently under-represented in the workforce.
- Manages employees fairly and appropriately, ensuring there is no discrimination on grounds of any of the protected characteristics.
- Encourages a culture of openness and ensures that all employees have a safe and supportive environment in which to work regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientations.
- Continues to be committed to be an inclusive organisation that people want to work for.
- Ensures employees and councillors are given appropriate equalities training and have access to training in anti- discriminatory practices.
- Makes all reasonable efforts to support employees by making adjustments where appropriate.
- Undertakes job evaluations and carrying out a pay and grading review, including Gender Pay Gap reporting, as part of the process to develop fair employment and equal pay policies.
- Works to provide information and guidance to managers and employees on a range of equalities related issues.

10.Reviewing the Strategy

Progress against the Equality Action Plan will be monitored quarterly by the Executive Leadership Team and progress reported to the Policy and Resource Committee on an annual basis.

We want to ensure that our equality, diversity and inclusion activities are measurable, so we know how we're doing and can be challenged if things don't improve. These measures will include:

- A regular employee survey looking at how well the Council is delivering the Strategy and Equalities Action Plan
- The percentage of employees who declare additional personal data
- The number of Diversity Champions and allies who support EDI within the Council

We will also continue to ask partners how well we address equality, diversity and inclusion as a council to identify if we are making progress. We know we can't assess our own performance, so we need others to help. We will do this by:

- Setting up an officers' working group
- Working with external community groups and other stakeholders to monitor progress with delivery of the plan
- Working with Trade Unions

- All employees to regularly monitor objectives, behaviours, wellbeing, peer feedback and workplace culture.

Types of Discrimination, Protected Characteristics & Protection from Discrimination

Protected Characteristics

The duties and the Equalities Act 2010 seek to outlaw unlawful discrimination against a person or group of people because of; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

| Protected Characteristic | Meaning |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Age | Relates to a person belonging to a particular age group (e.g., 32-year-olds) or range of ages (e.g. 65-75-year olds). |
| Disability | A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. |
| Gender Reassignment | The process of transitioning from one sex to another. |
| Marriage and Civil Partnership | Marriage is a union between a man and a woman or between a same-sex couple. Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except where permitted by the Equality Act). |
| Pregnancy and maternity | Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes not treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding. |
| Race | Refers to the protected characteristic of race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins. |
| Religion and belief | Religion refers to any religion, including a lack of religion. Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition. |
| Sex | A man or a woman. |
| Sexual Orientation | Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes. |

Discrimination

| Types of discrimination | Prohibited conduct |
|--|---|
| Direct discrimination | Being treated less favourably than someone else due because of a protected characteristic. |
| Indirect discrimination | The way something is done means you are treated less favourably than someone else due to a perceived difference. |
| Discrimination arising from a disability | Where the discrimination is as a result of the disability. |
| Perception discrimination | Being treated less favourably than someone else because of a perceived difference, regardless of whether it is true. |
| Discrimination by association | Being treated less favourably than others because of your association with someone with a protected characteristic (which protects carers). |
| Victimisation | Being treated unjustly or unfairly when making a complaint or taking out a grievance or helping someone else to make a complaint in relation to a protected characteristic. |
| Harassment | Unwanted conduct relating to a protected characteristic. |

Situations in which a person is protected from discrimination

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is protected from discrimination:

- when they are in the workplace
- when they use public services like healthcare (for example, visiting a doctor or local hospital) or education (for example, school or college)
- when they use businesses and other organisations that provide services and goods (like shops, restaurants, and cinemas)
- when they use transport
- when they join a club or association (for example, a local football club)
- when they have contact with public bodies like their local council or government departments

Great Yarmouth Borough Council – Equality Action Plan 2021 to 2023

Version 1.0 (November 2021)

STATUS (Source: LGA Framework)

Developing - An organisation at the Developing level has made an organisational commitment to improving equality. It is putting in place processes to deliver on equality issues and is working towards meeting and exceeding the statutory requirements.

H

Achieving - An organisation at the Achieving level has policies, processes and procedures in place and is delivering some good equality outcomes. It is not only meeting but can demonstrate it is exceeding statutory requirements.

S

Excellent - An organisation at the Excellent level has mainstreamed equality throughout the organisation and can demonstrate that it is delivering significant outcomes across its services that are making a difference in its communities. The organisation not only exceeds statutory requirements, and it is an exemplar council for equality and diversity in the local government and wider public sector.

P

Equality Priority 1: Understanding and supporting our communities

Rationale To enhance understanding and promote equality and diversity across the borough of Great Yarmouth. Good data equality analysis enables an understanding of the differences in outcomes and opportunities experienced by people in different communities in key areas of life such as health, education, community safety, housing quality, access to work and so on. Equality analysis is about identifying where the outcomes and opportunities gaps are for different communities, including those sharing the protected characteristics.

| | What | Actions | Outcome | Timescale | Lead | Status |
|-----|------------------------------------|---|---|------------|---|--------|
| 1.1 | Collecting and sharing information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with service users to identify specific communications needs & where we can improve our communication methods. Refresh corporate website and accessibility statement including publication of accessible policy and guidance. | <p>Services users and residents are able to access services.</p> <p>Improved reach of information by targeted communications in the right language and at the</p> | Q1 2022/23 | <p>Head of Customer Services</p> <p>IMT Manager</p> | D |

| | | | | | | |
|-----|---|--|--|---------|---|----------|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a feedback loop from service users to help the council improve on access to information. • Review tone of voice for external communication materials and channels. | right level to aid understanding. | | Head of Marketing & Communications | |
| 1.2 | Analysing and using data and information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and benchmark the make-up of the borough's population. • Map health inequalities. | Equality data helping to shape the council's workforce and services. | Ongoing | Senior Information & Performance Officer | D |
| 1.3 | Effective community engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate community engagement and conversations that reach out to seldom heard cohorts & hear their voice. • Deliver the Community Champions' Programme which targets harder-to-reach (seldom heard residents). • Support & facilitate the Great Yarmouth Multicultural & Faith Network bringing residents and agencies together. • Enact the Residents' Engagement Strategy. | <p>The council is open to feedback to help shape services.</p> <p>Residents are supported and listened to.</p> | Ongoing | <p>Strategic Director (PB)</p> <p>Head of Customer Services</p> <p>Housing Director</p> | D |
| 1.4 | Fostering good community relations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deliver external communications to promote equality, diversity and inclusivity. • Ensure staff understand how to access translation services. | Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity is being promoted via social media channels informed by analytics on reach and engagement. | Ongoing | <p>Head of Communications & Marketing</p> <p>Head of Organisational Development</p> | D |
| 1.5 | Participation in public life | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue outreach work and campaigns to support participation in public life and ceremonial events including protected groups. | The council actively involves local people, including underrepresented groups, in opportunities for public participation e.g., Remembrance, Civic Reception, use of the Town Hall etc. | Ongoing | <p>Chief Executive</p> <p>Head of Communications & Marketing</p> | A |

Equality Priority 2: Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment

Rationale *Narrowing equality gaps and improving the life chances of different groups will requires a pooling of evidence, resources and action planning. Strategic leadership – both political and managerial – is key to establishing a strong vision for equality and improving equality outcomes. Local councillors, in particular, have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the local authority's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services.*

| | What | Actions | Outcome | Timescale | Lead | Status |
|-----|--|---|---|---------------|--|----------|
| 2.1 | Leadership priorities and working in partnership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior leaders demonstrate commitment and due regard to equalities in decision making. Ensure Corporate Plan, Annual Action Plan and Performance Reports demonstrate adherence to the equalities agenda. | <p>Political and executive leaders demonstrate personal knowledge and understanding of local communities and continue to show commitment to reducing inequality.</p> <p>The organisation promotes a positive narrative around equality and good relations across the whole community.</p> | Ongoing | Chief Executive Leader | D |
| 2.2 | Assessing equality impact in policy and decision taking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update Great Yarmouth Borough Council's approach to Equality Impact Assessments (EIA). Review and update the Council's policy on making accessible information for all. | EIA screening & reporting informing policy setting. Staff able to use of EIA tools in service planning | Q4 2021/22 | Head of Organisational Development Senior Information & Performance Officer | D |

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|-----|--|--|--|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| 2.3 | Equality objectives and annual reporting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present annual report to Policy & Resources Committee & the Executive Leadership Team on equality, diversity and inclusivity in practice including an annual health check of equality, diversity and inclusivity data. | <p>Report to P&R Committee and Executive Leadership Team with equalities championed at senior level within the organisation.</p> <p>Staff Engagement Group (SEG) and Unions & Members' JWCG engaged in reporting activity.</p> | <p>Q1 each year</p> <p>Quarterly</p> | <p>Head of Organisational Development</p> <p>Head of Organisational Development</p> | A |
| 2.4 | Performance monitoring and scrutiny | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update the Council's Equality Monitoring Policy and guidance. Monitor discrimination complaints & take appropriate action. Publish Equality Monitoring Policy on-line. | <p>Policies adhere to legal requirements.</p> <p>Statistics published.</p> | <p>Q1 2022/23</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Head of Legal & Governance</p> <p>Head of Organisational Development</p> | D |

| Equality Priority 3: Responsive services and customer care | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|------------|--------------------|--------|
| <p>Rationale Public services must meet the needs of a diverse range of local communities and individuals. The social and economic make-up of places varies greatly and is dynamic over time. Users of a local authority's services should be treated with dignity and respect and have their human rights protected. Excellent service providers are proactive, rather than reactive, and are able to consider interrelated and long-term outcomes.</p> | | | | | | |
| | What | Actions | Outcome | Timescale | Lead | Status |
| 3.1 | Commissioning and procuring services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed equalities in new Procurement Strategy. Provide training of equality requirements for contract managers. Ensure links to the Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity Strategy are contained in any contract/specification documentation. | <p>Services provided directly or commissioned promote equalities and inclusivity.</p> <p>Suppliers are producing evidence of inclusivity and compliance with relevant equalities legislations.</p> | Q2 2022/23 | Resources Director | D |

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|-----|--|---|---|-----------|--|---|
| 3.2 | Integration of equality objectives into service planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure our high quality natural and built environments are as accessible and inclusive as possible including seeking ways to improve and enhance our compliance with the Equality Act 2010. | High quality public realm improvements that are accessible for all. | Ongoing | Strategic Director (KB) | D |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have due regard to equalities in Service Plans. | Services have considered equalities & inclusion. | Ongoing | Major Projects & Development Director Management Team | |
| 3.3 | Service delivery | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue working with multi-agency partner organisations & commissioned services to reduce inequality in all of our communities as set out in the Great Yarmouth Locality Strategy. | Health inequalities reducing. | Ongoing | Strategic Director (PB) | D |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor & analyse client equality data and use to inform future service provision. | Community safety improving. | Quarterly | Head of Customer Services/ Housing Director | |

| Equality Priority 4: Diverse and engaged workforce | | | | | | |
|---|---------------------|--|---|---|------------------------------------|--------|
| <p>Rationale <i>To promote equality and diversity, we need to ensure that our role as an employer reflects the role we have as a service provider. Our human resources (HR) policies and procedures should reflect good practice in equality and diversity. Anyone applying to the council for a job or working for us should feel confident that they are treated fairly.</i></p> | | | | | | |
| | What | Actions | Outcome | Timescale | Lead | Status |
| 4.1 | Workforce diversity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement plans to ensure the composition of the workforce reflects that of the borough's population. Promote self-declaration of protected characteristics amongst staff and members. Develop specific targeted recruitment campaign(s) to bridge any gaps. | Workforce composition mirrors that of the Borough's population. | Q4 2021/22 Ongoing As required As required | Head of Organisational Development | D |

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|------------|--|--|---|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop retention and progression for marginalised cohorts within the workforce. | | | | |
| 4.2 | Inclusive strategies and policies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all HR policies have due regard to equalities. | Policies support equality, diversity and inclusion. | Ongoing | Head of Organisational Development | A |
| 4.3 | Collecting, analysing and publishing workforce data | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect, compile and publish workforce data. Action an annual employee survey looking at how well the Council is delivering its EDI Strategy and Equalities Action Plan. Establish Diversity Champions to support EDI within the Council. | <p>Workforce survey informs data. Workforce data including gender pay gap data published.</p> <p>Equality Champions in place.</p> | Annually | Head of Organisational Development | A |
| 4.4 | Learning and Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate equalities training in workforce development plan. Investigate benchmarking and Award Schemes to drive improvement and deliver best practice in equality, diversity & inclusivity. | Workforce is culturally aware and demonstrating understanding. | <p>Q4 2021/22</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | Head of Organisational Development | D |
| 4.5 | Health and wellbeing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop regular internal communications to promote equalities-related events and celebrations. Working with Staff Engagement Group (SEG), establish focus/support groups. Work with the SEG to gauge interest in developing staff focus groups e.g. LGBTQ+ | Staff feel supported. Feedback informing workforce culture and training needs. | From Q1 2022/23 onwards | Head of Organisational Development | A |