

East Herts Council Corporate Equality Policy

Forward

The East Herts Equality Policy sets out the Council's vision and commitment to ensure equality of access and opportunities for all living and working in the district. East Herts Council is committed to improving the quality of life for all its residents and employees. The Council values the diversity of the community and wants to use the community's wealth of experience to create an excellent quality of life in East Hertfordshire.

The Council accepts that discrimination affects people in complex ways and discrimination is a major barrier to a fair and just society. The Council is dedicated to the promotion of equal opportunities and to removing any discrimination in service delivery, procurement and employment. The Council is committed to achieving equality and community cohesion in partnership with other organisations and local communities.

This Equality Policy clarifies the Council's commitment to equalities by incorporating our legal duties and best practice standards. The Council is always learning. It endeavours to deliver its promise and review regularly to ensure compliance with legislation and its duties.

Introduction

East Herts is the largest District in Hertfordshire. The estimated population of East Herts in 2014 was 141,900. The population had grown by 8.83% since 2003 which is slightly less than growth found in Eastern England and across England.

In mid-2015, ONS (Office for National Statistics) announced their latest population estimates which indicated that East Herts had grown larger than originally anticipated, estimating the 2014 midyear population at 143,021. This was due to ONS underestimating the armed forces migration movements nationally.

The average age of residents in East Herts is 40.2, compared to the East of England regional average of 40.6.

Projections show that East Herts is becoming more in line with the average age population found in East England region, which sits slightly higher than the average age of the UK (39.69)

The proportion of Male to Females found in East Herts mirror very closely with national patterns at 50.74% Men: 49.26% Women, with women living longer on average.

13.1% of the population of East Herts said that they had a limiting long-term illness and 3.4% said that their general health was 'not good'. If these two groups are used as the basis for estimating the number of people that may be living with a disability this equates to 16.5% of the population, or just over 22,000 people.

The Census of 2011 showed that East Herts as a District has a high % population declared as White ethnicity, at 95.47%, with some variation between the wards; the range from 91.25% in Bishop's Stortford Central to 98.70% found in Datchworth. This compares to Hertfordshire, as a county at 87.58% and National average at 85.42%.

1.28% of the population in East Herts were born in an EU accession country compared to 2.05% in England (Census, 2011). In terms of language, East Herts has a varying proportion of the population with English as their main language, ranging from 90.1%, again in Bishop's Stortford Central to 98.5% in Watton at Stone.

Stonewall, the recognised campaign and lobbying charity for gay rights, states that between 5-7% is a reasonable estimate of people in Britain who are gay, lesbian or bisexual, this equates to just over 8500 people in East Herts.

In 2013, there were 58,912 households in East Herts spread across 30 wards, with the district containing 5 major towns. There are distinct differences in ages and wealth within the different wards.

Key development proposals within the District are likely to increase household counts dramatically over the next 5-10 years as well as impacting on our services

The council recognises that understanding the needs of different sections of the community is essential if it is to effectively deliver services.

This Equality Policy aims to oppose social exclusion for all disadvantaged people in East Herts. It recognises the Council's duties, obligations and responsibilities towards all our communities.

Our Vision

East Herts Council is committed to improving the quality of life and active participation for all living and working in the district. We are putting systems in place to ensure that we have a workforce that reflects the diversity of skills, knowledge, experience and richness of our communities.

Our Equalities Policy is guided by the following principles:

- That the District should remain a prosperous, safe and healthy place where people want and are able to live and work.
- Together with the Council, all residents and service users, service providers, stakeholders, partners and employees have a responsibility to promote equalities and challenge discrimination
- Everyone living and working in East Herts are able to participate fully and enjoy a safe environment free of discrimination and harassment.
- Our residents have equal access to quality services to meet their individual needs

Legal Duties

The Council recognises its duties under the following UK and EU legislation and statutory guidance:

- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Mental Health Act 1983
- Asylum & Immigration Act 1996
- Crime & Disorder Act 1998
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Parental Leave Directive 1999
- Part-time Workers Regulations 2000
- Criminal Justice Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Civil Partnership Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Parental Leave (EU Directive) 2013
 - Shared Parental Leave Regulations 2014
- Care Act 2015

The Council is committed to meeting its duties under this legislation. It also recognises that some groups do not benefit from the protection of legislation, but will ensure good practice in equal opportunities towards these groups through the policy.

Policy Statement

East Herts Council is committed to identify and eradicate any form of discrimination, direct or indirect, institutional or other, both in employment and in the procurement and delivery of services. Promoting equalities is about putting principles into practice. Our commitment to all our employees and service users are:

- To eliminate discrimination on the grounds of gender, disability, learning difficulty, health status, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, faith or religious belief, age, marital status, responsibility for children or dependents, sexuality and gender assignment;
- To promote equality of opportunity and fair treatment for all our communities;
- To promote fair and equal access to services by all citizens on the basis of need and to provide services in a manner which is sensitive to the individual;
- To help and support members of the public and employees who face harassment and to take action against perpetrators where possible;
- To have an employee complement that reflects the diversity of our communities
- To promote equality of opportunity and fair treatment in employment and training and to ensure equal pay for work of equal value;
- To exercise its community leadership role to promote equality;
- To work in partnership with stakeholders and communities to ensure effective consultation to support our equality objectives;
- To ensure that all services contribute to the Equality Action Plan with resources, targets and timescales;
- To monitor and evaluate all aspects of service delivery and employment and to eliminate differences demonstrated by unfair outcomes.

Equalities and Diversity Objectives – what the Council will do.

The Council's Equalities commitments will be promoted by a number of key actions. These are grouped under five strategic equality and diversity objectives.

- a. Promoting Community Leadership And Community Cohesion**
- b. Improving Community Engagement And Communication**
- c. Promoting Equality In Service Delivery**
- d. Promoting Equality Of Opportunity In Employment And Training**
- e. Evaluating The Success Of Our Equalities Commitments**

Actions

Promoting Community Leadership and Community Cohesion

The Council will continue to ensure that its provision and delivery of services responds to the needs of all local communities through ongoing consultation with key groups and the use of equality impact assessments.

Corporate Equality Plan

The Council will develop a Corporate Equality Plan which will set out more detailed targets and actions for each department that will be delivered each year to implement this policy. This plan will be consulted on with designated community groups.

Customer Service Strategy

The Council has developed a Customer Service Strategy with a focus on planning sustainable and accessible services for all customers within the district.

East Herts Community Safety Strategy

The Council will aim to ensure that the adverse impact of crime within the community is addressed through the annual action plans that are developed by the Community Safety Partnership.

Improving Consultation / Community Engagement and Communication

The Council will develop its consultation and communication strategies in order to ensure that the public has access to the information and services provided and are engaged in their development.

Consultation / Community Engagement

The Council will:

- Engage with users and designated community groups, employees and stakeholder groups on its service delivery and priorities in order to increase the appropriateness and responsiveness of services to all sections of the community. This process will be clear, open and inclusive;
- Develop consultation mechanisms to increase the participation of minority communities, disadvantaged groups and those who are socially excluded;
- Consult on its Corporate Equality Plan with local community groups and stakeholders representing the views of minority communities;
- Monitor the impact of consultation mechanisms.

Communication

The Council will:

- Publicise this policy and the Corporate Equalities Plan;
- Ensure that if needed information on key Council services can be made available in other languages and formats for non-English speakers and people with disabilities;
- Ensure that if needed a professional interpreting service is available for service users whose first language is not English;
- Ensure that communication responds to differing levels of literacy and comprehension;
- Ensure that all services address the access requirements of the Equality Act 2010
- Ensure that the complaints procedure is accessible to all.

Promoting Equality in Service Delivery

Assess Functions and Policies

The Council will

- Assess the relevance of its policies and functions to equalities legislation and commitments;
- Undertake equality impact assessments of relevant functions, policies and proposed policies and publish the results.

Departmental Equality Action Plans

The Council will

- Ensure that all services will assess their service plans annually and undertake equality impact assessments of relevant service activity, functions and policies’;
- Ensure that all council services, delivered directly or through contractors, take forward the Council’s equalities and diversity commitments;
- Ensure that procedures for commissioning and awarding of tenders are free from all institutional discrimination;
- Promote the social model of disability in the design and delivery of services in order to reduce the environmental and cultural barriers encountered by people with disabilities due to other people’s attitudes towards them;
- Identify groups within the community whose needs / requirements are not being met or are less well met by the Council;
- Ensure that all our services are flexible and respond to the needs of different groups within the community;
- Promote customer care.

Fair Treatment

The Council will

- Keep under review and respond to customer complaints about harassment and domestic violence;
- Provide appropriate support for the victims of harassment, including racism, homophobia and domestic violence.

Action for Access to Public Buildings

The Council will continue to implement its programme of action to fulfil its obligations for public building access **including pedestrian access to car parks, parks, etc** under the Equality Act 2010 and identify the necessary resources to support this.

Promoting Equality of Opportunity in Employment and Training

Recruitment, Selection and Retention

- The Council will recruit and treat applicants for jobs or promotion on objective criteria, having regard to relevant experience, potential, skills and abilities. No applicant or employee will be placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions which are not necessary to the job, or which constitute direct or indirect discrimination;
- The Council will continue to commit to the Two Ticks Disability Scheme and will take the following action;
 - To interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum (essential) criteria for a job vacancy and consider them on their abilities;
 - To ensure there is a mechanism in place to discuss, at any time, but at least once a year, with disabled employees what can be done to make sure they can develop and use their abilities;
 - To make every effort when employees become disabled to make sure they stay in employment;
 - To take action to ensure that all employees develop the appropriate level of disability awareness needed to make these commitments work;
 - To annually review the five commitments and what has been achieved, plan ways to improve on them and let employees and Jobcentre Plus know about progress and future plans;
- The Council will ensure that all employees understand their responsibility for implementing the Corporate Equality Policy and review this through the employee appraisal process.

Training

The Council will

- Ensure that employees will be trained to carry out all duties in line with equalities legislation and the implementation of the Council's commitments in the Comprehensive Equality Policy;
- Provide a training plan which integrates diversity and equal opportunities. This plan will be consulted on with employees, managers and unions.

Review

The Council will

- Ensure that all employment policies and procedures are consistent with current legislation and all relevant Codes of Practice;
- Ensure that proactive measures are put in place to identify and address areas of inequality in all areas of human resource management.

Workforce Monitoring

The Council will

- Undertake Workforce Profiling by ethnic group, gender, disability, age, religion, part/full time status and sexual orientation, analyse the implications of such profiling against community profiling, and publish the results annually;

- Monitor, by ethnic group, gender, disability, and age applicants for jobs at each stage of the recruitment process, analyse the data against community profiling and publish the results;
- Monitor employees promotion and training, grievances, harassment, bullying, disciplinary action, performance appraisals, training and turnover and report on findings;
- Undertake exit interviews to monitor reasons for employees leaving

Fair Treatment

The Council will

- Act on the Equality Policy and harassment policy, which promote every employee's right to be treated with respect, by challenging racist, sexist, homophobic, and other discriminatory behaviour;
- Provide clear employment policies and procedures which promote equal opportunities and family friendly employment practice;
- Monitor complaints from employees against harassment, victimisation and bullying and any other discriminatory behaviour.

Equal Pay

The Council will conduct an equal pay audit every 2 years. The last review was completed in 2014 and the next one is due in 2016.

The Council will also ensure that it complies with requirements that are due to come into effect in April 2016 to publish data on the difference in pay between men and women. This will include the difference between male and female starting salaries, the difference between average basic pay and total average earnings of men and women broken down by grade and job type, as well as other components.

Complaints

The Council will safeguard the individual rights of any employee who wishes to complain.

Evaluating the Success of Our Equalities Commitments

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Council will

- Develop self-assessment and audit procedures to establish performance against the Equality Framework for Local Government;
- Monitor the progress of the Comprehensive Corporate Equality Plan, revising targets annually and publishing the results;
- Ensure that systems are developed to audit and monitor service delivery and customer satisfaction;
- Sensitively collect and analyse data on the background of service users, complainants, perpetrators and victims of harassment and publish results;
- Protect complainants against victimisation;
- Train employees to undertake peer inspections of services using the impact assessment process;
- Promote the use of customer feedback, service delivery feedback and information gathered from user satisfaction surveys to provide further monitoring information;
- Ensure that monitoring and consultation feedback is used to inform best practice;
- Review this policy every three years, or when new legislation requires it to be reassessed

Roles and Responsibilities

Council

The Council is responsible for setting policy.

The Executive Member with the portfolio holder for Health and Wellbeing – Cllr Eric Buckmaster is the Council's Champion for promoting Equality and Diversity.

The Corporate Management Team and Equalities Officers Group are responsible for reviewing the delivery and performance management of this Policy and the Corporate Equality Plan.

The Executive Committee will make recommendations to Council on the development of policy.

The Council will seek to have this policy endorsed by the East Herts Local Strategic Partnership and its constituent agencies.

Corporate Management Team

The lead officer for equalities in the Council is the Director of Customer and Community Services

The Chief Executive and Directors who make up the Council's Corporate Management Team are directly responsible for the implementation of this policy.

They are also responsible for ensuring that all staff are aware of their respective responsibilities under this policy and are given appropriate training and support.

Directors will be required to lead and direct its implementation corporately and within their own directorates.

Equalities Officers Group

The Equalities Officers Group will support the Corporate Management Team by guiding the implementation of the policy and developing monitoring, evaluation, audit and impact assessment procedures and guidance.

Heads of Service

Within directorates, implementation of this policy and the Corporate Equalities Plan will be managed through Departmental Management Teams made up of the Heads of Service.

Heads of Service will be responsible for ensuring that employees are aware of the policy and able to implement it.

Employees

All employees are responsible for complying with this Policy and its associated procedures and guidance. All employees are responsible for challenging breaches of this policy and can make use of the grievance procedure, harassment policy and whistle blowing policy where needed

Corporate Equality Scheme 2016-2019

Introduction

The Council is dedicated to the promotion of equal opportunities and to removing any discrimination in service delivery, procurement and employment. The Council is committed to achieving equality and community cohesion in partnership with other organisations and local communities.

The Equality Act 2010 provides a cross-cutting legislative framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all; to update, simplify and strengthen the previous legislation; and to deliver a simple modern and accessible framework of discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

This scheme explains how East Herts Council will meet its general and specific duties under The Public Sector Equality Duty, Section 149 of the Act. It will be updated as new legislation comes into force in other areas of equality legislation.

Whilst explaining the Council's responses to existing duties the scheme anticipates future legislative requirements. Our approach will be applied to other groups which suffer discrimination and disadvantage in society. This is explained further in the Council's Corporate Equality Policy.

If you require this information in large print, Braille or another format please contact the council on 01279 655261.

If you would like this information translated in another language please contact:

East Herts District Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford
Herts
SG13 8EQ
Tel: 01279 655261
e-mail: enquiries@eastherts.gov.uk

General Duties

The Equality Act 2010 covers discrimination on the grounds of the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The Public Sector Equality Duty, Section 149 of the Act, replaced the three public sector duties relating to race, disability and gender with one integrated Equality Duty covering the new protected characteristics. The Public Sector Equality Duty came into force in April 2011 and states a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

The general and specific duties are reflected in the Council's Comprehensive Equality Policy.

The policy identifies 5 strategic equality and diversity objectives.

1. Promoting Community Leadership and Community Cohesion
2. Improving Community Engagement and Communication
3. Promoting Equality In Service Delivery
4. Promoting Equality of Opportunity in Employment And Training
5. Evaluating the Success of our Equalities Commitments

A detailed action plan has been developed to meet the commitments of the Corporate Equality Policy 2016-2019. The plan highlights specific actions in relation to the protected characteristics – age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Progress of the plan is monitored by the Council's Corporate Management Team, Equalities Officers Group and Executive. The plan forms an integral part of our generic equality scheme and will be reviewed every three years in line with legislative guidance.

Heads of Service are required to review their service plans annually (as part of the council's financial and business planning process). Part of this includes identifying areas of work that should be subject to an equality impact assessment. This information is fed back through the service representative on the Equalities Officers Group, for monitoring by the council's Equalities Officer.

As required by legislation the Council will take steps to:

- Identify which of the Council's functions, policies and proposed policies are relevant to the Public Sector Equality Duty. We have also identified those functions, policies

and proposed policies relevant to equality on the grounds of the nine protected characteristics age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The list of functions can be found in appendix 1

- Set priorities for these functions based on their relevance to the protected characteristics. This is laid out in our Equality Impact Assessment Programme.
- Assess how the functions and any related policies or proposed policies affect the protected characteristic groups through the introduction of our Equality Impact Assessment Process.
- Consider how policies and functions might be changed, where necessary, to meet our Public Sector Equality Duty as well as our Corporate Equality Policy commitments through the use of our Equality Impact Assessment Process.

Specific Duties

Assessing the impact of functions, policies and proposed policies on equality

Following the commitment of the Corporate Equality Policy the Council will ensure that an Equality Impact Assessment Programme and Process is maintained and continued. Existing functions and policies will be prioritised for impact assessment. These are listed in our Corporate Equality Plan 2016-2019. All new proposed functions and policies will also be impact assessed.

The assessments will check whether individual policies or services, have a disproportionate benefit to some groups in the community, and whether the policy is likely to lead to direct or indirect discrimination. This may include assessing what barriers different parts of the community may face in accessing information or Council services. They will also recommend any alternative actions required to redress inequality and promote equality of opportunity.

The information gathered through these impact assessments will inform future Corporate Equality Action Plans. The Corporate Management Team and Equalities Officers Group will receive an annual report on the key findings from the impact assessment programme so that information gathered is used to prioritise future equality actions.

Consulting on the impact of functions, policies and proposed policies on equality and involving people from minority communities

In developing this scheme, the Corporate Equality Policy and Corporate Equality Plan, the Council will consult with members of community groups, partner organisations and its Equalities Officers Group. This will involve people from, and organisations working to promote the needs of, minority communities including those for minority ethnic groups, disabled people, older and younger people, religious groups and the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities.

Individual services conduct customer surveys, and findings will be analysed to identify any adverse impact of our services on minority communities and men and women. We continue to develop consultation and scrutiny processes for our Equality Impact Assessment Programme to ensure that people from minority communities, and both genders, are involved in the process.

Arrangement for gathering and using information for monitoring policies for any adverse impact on the promotion of equality

The Council has established and is further developing monitoring systems to assess access to services, treatment of customers and equality of outcomes for its functions and policies. This includes monitoring on the grounds of race, disability, gender, age, religion and sexual orientation where relevant. Information may be gathered at the point of service access, through customer satisfaction surveys, or from resident surveys. This information will be used both for performance management as well as for equality impact assessment. Where unequal access to service is identified, or differences are found in outcomes of services for

different groups, service plans will identify specific objectives to address the inequality.

The Council will assess the different needs and priorities of different groups, including men and women, using monitoring, consultation and equality impact assessments in order to deliver sustainable and accessible services that meet the needs of all customers within the district.

Consultation data relating to partnership work will seek to assess the needs of specific groups and differences in views and experiences.

The Corporate Equality Plan and Corporate Equality Targets are monitored by the Council's Corporate Management Team, Equalities Officers Group and Executive.

Arrangement for publishing the results of such assessment, consultation and monitoring

The agendas and reports to the Council's Equalities Officers Group, Scrutiny Committees and Executive will be published on our website. Annual updates on the implementation of our Corporate Equality Plan will be published on our website. One or more equality objectives every four years from April 2012 will be published on our website.

Arrangements for ensuring that people have access to information and services

The Council offers to make information available in alternative languages and formats where required for key services. We have translated documents, and produced them in large print, and on audio tape. We also make use of interpreters for customers whose first language is not English who require them for key services. We will make this offer of alternative languages and formats as clear as possible on all relevant documents.

The Council's Customer Services and Service departments have access to Language Line which enables us to work with interpreters on the phone. We also have a text messaging service and are developing the use of e-mail and the internet to increase access to our services.

The Council provides services in alternative ways, such as visiting disabled customers at home to ensure equality of access to our services.

The Council will continually improve access to its public buildings including pedestrian access to car parks, parks, etc for people with disabilities in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Arrangements for training employees on issues connected to equality

The Council will develop an equality training programme within our Corporate Training Programme. This includes specific training on equality as well as integrating equality into all aspects of our training programme. Training is also provided to Councillors on equality. All employees are assessed annually for training needs in relation to equality through their appraisal.

Specific Duties for Employment

The Corporate Equality Policy commits the Council to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of gender, disability, learning difficulty, health status, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, faith or religious belief, age, marital status, responsibility for children or dependents, sexuality and gender assignment. This applies to both employment and service delivery.

The Council monitors various aspects of its employment procedures on the grounds of race, gender, disability and age. It will review existing procedures and policies to ensure they do not discriminate on the grounds of gender assignment.

The Council completed an Equal Pay Audit in 2014 and the next one is due in 2 years time in 2016. The methodology has been agreed by councils union representatives and councils corporate management teams. The actions arising from this audit have formed specific objectives addressing any identified gender pay gaps and occupational segregation.

We will ensure that the differing needs of our employees are accounted for by consulting employees through the Equalities Officers' Group on employment and training policies as appropriate and relevant.

Individual feedback is gathered through annual Performance and Development Reviews (PDRs). Assessments of needs in relation to reasonable adjustments for disabled employees are reviewed at least on an annual basis.

Eliminating harassment

Employees are able to take forward issues of harassment through the Council's agreed Grievance and Harassment procedures. This is monitored on grounds of race, disability, gender, age, religion and sexual orientation. An annual report will be made to the Equalities Officers Group of such complaints.

All local residents are able to report harassment to the Council. The Council works in partnership with the police and other agencies such as Housing Associations, to investigate and respond to harassment. Where possible the Council will take action through the use of enforcement action, anti-social behaviour contracts or anti-social behaviour orders. We will work in conjunction with our partners to gather evidence for prosecutions. With customer consent we will share information with the Police and monitor such complaints on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexuality, religion and age. Reports will be made to the Community Safety Partnership and Executive on such complaints.

Promoting positive attitudes

The Council will promote the use of the Social Model of Disability in its work. This model views the discrimination experienced by disabled people as brought about by discrimination and prejudice which results from real physical, economic, political and cultural barriers in society. This is contrast to the medical model of disability which views disabled people in terms of their impairments.

East Herts Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2013-2018 and The Care Act 2015 "wellbeing principle" spells out a local authority's duty to ensure people's wellbeing is at the centre of all it does.

We will ensure that we make good use of Council publications including Link magazine to promote equality of access to its services, to challenge discrimination and to celebrate the diversity of the local community.

Feedback and further information

We welcome feedback on our work on equality. If you have any comments about any part of the Council's work on equality please contact us on:

Phone: 01279 655261

Textphone: 07734 334504

E-mail: enquiries@eastherts.gov.uk

Mail: The Council Offices, Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford, Herts SG13 8EQ

Appendix 1

FUNCTIONS, POLICES AND PROPOSED POLICIES ASSESSED AS RELEVANT TO THE PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY AND THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE EQUALITY POLICY

The list presents the functions under the heading of the respective management board lead.

Chief Executive

Runs the Council supported by

Director of Customer & Community Services
Director of Finance & Support Services
Director of Neighbourhood Services

Director of Customer & Community Services

Environmental Services

Environmental Coordination
Business Support
Waste Services
Parks & Open Spaces
Environmental Inspection

Communications, Engagement &
Cultural Services

Engagement & Partnerships
Communications
Hertford Theatre

Customer Services & Parking

Front Line Team
Web Team
Information Manager
Parking Services

Business Development

Performance Team
Economic Development

Director of Finance & Support Services

HR & Organisational Development

Human Resources Team

Strategic Finance

Strategic Accountancy
Property
Asset management &
Valuations

Revenues & Benefit Services

Revenues Division
Benefit Division
Systems & Support
Control & Fraud

Democratic & Legal Support Services

Democratic Services
Electoral Services
Legal Section
Land Charges

Governance & Risk management

Risk Management, Insurance, Health & Safety
& Procurement
Transactional Finance
Facilities Management

Director Of Neighbourhood Services

Housing Services

Community Safety &
Health Services

Planning and Building
Control

Joint Enforcement Team
Environmental Health
Business Team
Environment & Engineering Team
Emergency Planning
Health & Wellbeing

Development Control Managers/Planning
Officers
Development Control Tech/Admin
Planning Conservation
Planning Enforcement
Planning Policy
Building Control Managers & Building Control
Officers
Building Control Tech/Admin

Corporate Equality Plan 2016-2019

Introduction

This Corporate Equality Plan provides a three year action plan detailing how the objectives laid out in the Council's Equality Policy will be achieved. The plan details the Council's response to its general and specific duties under various pieces of legislation listed in the Equalities Policy.

The policy updates the Council's commitment to equality. It lays out the Council's key objectives in relation to equality and the roles and responsibilities of different parts of the Council to achieve these objectives.

This plan incorporates and replaces the Council's previous Comprehensive Corporate Equality Plan 2012-2015. The plan and policy provides a single framework for all equality groups to ensure that the Council's duties under The Equality Act 2010 are addressed in a combined strategic document.

Equality Impact Assessment Programme

The Corporate Equality Plan also includes our planned programme of Equality Impact Assessments over the next three years. The assessments will identify how our different services and policies impact on different parts of the community and will make recommendations to improve equality in service delivery and employment. The assessments will be published and consulted on. The programme was developed in light of our list of functions relevant to our equality duties. This list can be found in the Council's Generic Equality Scheme at our website www.eastherts.gov.uk.

Contacting the Council

We welcome feedback on this plan and our work on equality. If you have any comments about any part of the Council's work on equality please contact the Engagement & Partnerships Team.

Phone: 01279 655261
Textphone: 07734 334504
E-mail: enquiries@eastherts.gov.uk
Mail: The Council Offices, Wallfields, Pegs Lane,
Hertford, Herts, SG13 8EQ

Corporate Equality Plan 2016-2019

Objective	Actions/Activities	Responsible Team / Officer	Timeline
Promoting Community Leadership And Community Cohesion			
The Council will continue with the Comprehensive Corporate Equality Plan which sets out more detailed targets and actions for each service that will be delivered each year to implement this policy.	Refresh Comprehensive Corporate Equality Plan every 3 years or when legislation requires. Monitor Equality Plan annually.	Corporate Management Team, Heads of Service Equalities Officers Group	Review annually
To develop leadership ensure members and senior managers have an understanding of equality.	Review training needs	HR & Organisational Development, Democratic Services, CMT & Equalities Officers Group	Review annually
Improving Consultation, Community Engagement And Communication			
Utilise consultation mechanisms which include the participation of minority communities, disadvantaged groups and those who are socially excluded	Consult with minority community organisations on improving engagement.	Engagement & Partnerships Team	Review annually
All public meetings to be held in venues accessible to people with disabilities ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010 wherever possible	Minimum access requirements for buildings produced as guidance for departments when using venues. Guidance adopted by all departments.	All Services	Review annually
Publicise the Corporate Equality Policy and Corporate Equalities Plan	Publish Policy and Plan on website.	Engagement & Partnerships Team supported by the Web	January 2016
Ensure that if needed information on key Council services can be made available in other languages and formats for non-English speakers and disabled people.	Continue with corporate guidance on translation services and alternative formats.	Equalities Officer Group, Heads of Service	Review annually

Objective	Actions/Activities	Responsible Team / Officer	Timeline
Promoting Equality In Service Delivery			
Undertake equality impact assessments of relevant functions, policies and proposed policies and publish the results.	Continue to implement equalities impact assessment programme.	Corporate Management Team, Heads of Service	As part of the financial and business planning process
Continue to implement equalities impact assessment programme.	Ensure Equality Impact Assessment process is simple, useful and compliant	Equalities Officers Group, Heads of Service	Review annually
Ensure Equality Impact Assessment training is available for managers and employees who manage services and develop policies	Review training needs and provide ongoing guidance and support	Engagement & Partnerships Officer (Equalities)	Review annually
Ensure that procurement procedures for commissioning and awarding of tenders are free from all institutional discrimination.	Review procurement procedures in line with national guidance.	Procurement Officer & CMT	Review annually

Objective	Actions/Activities	Responsible Team/Officer	Timeline
Promoting Equality Of Opportunity In Employment And Training			
Recruit and treat applicants for jobs or promotion on objective criteria, having regard to relevant experience, potential, skills and abilities. No applicant or employee will be placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions which are not necessary to the job or which constitute direct or indirect discrimination.	Check all job descriptions and person specifications for vacant posts to ensure compliant with policy.	HR & Organisational Development and Heads of Service	Review annually
Ensure that all employees understand their responsibility for implementing the Comprehensive Equality Policy and review this through the PDR process.	Ensure equality policy addressed in induction courses. Ensure equality policy covered in employee handbook. Review appraisal guidance to address equality.	HR & Organisational Development, Corporate Management Team	Review annually
Ensure that employees will be trained to carry out all duties in line with equalities legislation and the implementation of the Council's commitments in the Corporate Equality Policy	Deliver Corporate Training Programme Include in PDRs	HR & Organisational Development HR & Organisational Development & ALL	Review annually
Provide a training plan which integrates diversity and equal opportunities. This plan will be consulted on with employees, managers and unions.	Review training needs in relation to equality and incorporate in Corporate Training Programme	HR & Organisational Development & Equalities Officers Group, Heads of Service	Review annually
Ensure that all employment policies and procedures are consistent with current legislation and all relevant Codes of Practice.	Undertake review of policy and procedure and recommend changes. Ensure policies are regularly updated to comply with changing legislation.	HR & Organisational Development	Review annually
Ensure that proactive measures are put in place to identify and address areas of inequality in all areas of human resource management.	Develop monitoring and reporting systems for HR policies with regards to equality.	HR & Organisational Development	Review annually

Objective	Actions/Activities	Responsible Team/Officer	Timeline
Undertake workforce profiling by ethnic group, gender, disability, age, religion and sexual orientation, analyse implications of such profiling against community profiling, and publish the results.	Publish current data on ethnic group, gender, disability and age, religion and sexual orientation. (Undertake pilot collection of religion and sexual orientation data.)	HR & Organisational Development	Report annually
Monitor by ethnic group, gender, disability, and age applicants for jobs, employees promotion and training, grievances, harassment, bullying, disciplinary action, performance appraisals, training and dismissals and	Produce annual report to Equalities Officers Group and Corporate Management Team.	HR & Organisational Development & Equalities Officers Group	Report annually
Undertake exit interviews to monitor reasons for employees leaving or transferring post.	Identify any equalities themes to exit interviews.	HR & Organisational Development & Equalities Officers Group	Review annually
Provide clear employment policies and procedures which promote equal opportunities and family friendly employment practice.	Undertake review of policy and procedure and recommend changes	HR & Organisational Development & Equalities Officers	Review annually
Monitor complaints from employees against harassment, victimisation and bullying and any other discriminatory behaviour	Provide annual report to Corporate Management Team & Members	HR & Organisational Development	Report annually
Carry out third Equal Pay Audit and Local Labour Market Review. Thereafter, monitor pay regularly in partnership with Unison.	Report produced detailing comparisons between employees of different genders in recruitment, training and retention, and shared with Unison.	HR & Organisational Development	2016
Safeguard the individual rights of any employee who wishes to complain.	Monitor complaints of victimisation by employees.	HR & Organisational Development	Review annually

Objective	Action Planned	Responsible Team / Officer	Timeline
Evaluating The Success OF Our Equalities Commitments			
Continue with self-assessment procedures to monitor performance against the Equality Framework for Local Government.	Update and maintain self-assessment against Equality Framework Achieving Level and maintain data.	Corporate Management Team, Heads of Service & Equalities Officer Group	Review annually
Share and compare experiences with other councils throughout the Hertfordshire Diversity Network in order to benchmark our progress and learn from others	Attend meetings, workshops, work on time limited projects and seek external challenge.	Engagement & Partnerships Officer (Equalities)	Review annually
Promote the use of customer feedback, service delivery feedback, information gathered from user satisfaction surveys to provide further monitoring information. and best practice	Provide guidance on sources of monitoring data and feedback.	Engagement & Partnerships Officer (Consultation)	Review annually
Review the Corporate Equality Policy every three years, or when new legislation requires it to be reassessed.	Undertake review	Corporate Management Team	Review annually

Equality Impact Assessment Programme 2016-2019

Department	Service / Policy For Assessment	Lead Officer	Target Completion Date
Housing Services	Housing Strategy Housing Register and Allocations Policy Homeless Review & Strategy	Louise Harris Claire Bennett Claire Bennett	April 2016 January 2017 March 2017
Communications, Engagement & Culture	Grants Hertford Theatre Communications Consultation	Claire Pullen Ben Cannell Lorna Georgiou Marianne McWhinnie	October 2017 May 2016 May 2017 April 2017
Business Development	Economic Development Strategy Scotts Grotto	Paul Pullin Sally Millett	March 2016 2016
Planning and Building Management	Statutory Planning Policy Building Control Development Control Application Process Duty Planning Officer	Claire Sime Trevor Clements Paul Burt Paul Burt	2016 2017 2017 December 2016

Customer Services & Parking	Parking Strategy 3Cs Reception Hertford CSC Charringtons House Website FOI/Data Protection	Andrew Pulham Becky Ranford Becky Ranford Becky Ranford Alasdair McWilliams Neil Pryor	March 2017 January 2016 January 2016 February 2016 March 2018 March 2018
Resources and Organisational Development	Recruitment Procedure Review Smoke-free Workplace Policy Carer's Policy Employee Handbook Family-Friendly Policy Flexible Working Policy General Leave Policy Job Evaluation Policy Shared Parental Leave Alcohol, Drug and Substance Misuse Policy Professional Career and Vocational Study Policy PDR procedure review Managing Violence and Aggression in the Workplace Redeployment Policy Secondment Policy Organisational Development Strategy	Vicki David Vicki David Allyson Williams Allyson Williams Allyson Williams Emma Freeman Allyson Williams Allyson Williams Allyson Williams Vicki David Helen Farrell Emma Freeman Claire Kirby Claire Kirby Claire Kirby Emma Freeman	August 2018 January 2018 July 2018 April 2018 January 2018 January 2018 January 2018 April 2018 August 2018
Democratic and Legal Support	Democratic Services Legal	Peter Mannings George Robertson	2016 2016
Revenues and Benefits Shared Service	Fraud Policy Appeals Benefits Council Tax NNDR Discretionary Housing Payments Fit & Proper Landlord Write-Off Safeguard Policy Visiting Team Council Tax Support Scheme Consultation	Dothlyn Brown Dothlyn Brown Dothlyn Brown Dothlyn Brown Dothlyn Brown Dothlyn Brown Dothlyn Brown Dothlyn Brown Dothlyn Brown Dothlyn Brown Su Tarran	October 2017 September 2017 September 2017 September 2017 September 2017 October 2017 October 2017 October 2017 October 2017 October 2017 Annually October

Community Safety & Health Services	Licensing Enforcement Policy Statement of Gambling Principles Statement of Licensing Policy Taxi Licensing Policy Community Safety Plan Emergency Planning Environment Engineering Team Commercial Service Plan Street Trading Consent Policy EH Enforcement Policy EH Health & Wellbeing Strategy Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy Empty Homes Strategy Fuel Poverty Strategy Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy	Robin Clark Oliver Rawlings Oliver Rawlings Oliver Rawlings Lizzie Robertson Gillian Field Gillian Field Paul Thomas-Jones Paul Thomas-Jones Paul Thomas-Jones Simon Barfoot Sheila Winterburn Sheila Winterburn Sheila Winterburn Sheila Winterburn	Annually May 2016 Mar 2019 Mar 2019 May 2016 (annually) October 2017 October 2017 May 2016 May 2016 April 2018 October 2018 December 2018 August 2016 August 2016 March 2019
Strategic Finance	Accountancy	Mandy Barton	August 2016
Environmental Services	Refuse and Recycling Healthcare Waste (contained in Refuse & Recycling) Environmental Crime (Enforcement)(to include PCSO/Dog Control Orders) Street Cleansing Pest Control Animal Services Parks and Open Spaces Play Areas Grounds Maintenance Leisure (to include disability audit review report from facilities for leisure contractor)	Cliff Cardoza/Jean Petrie	December 2016 December 2016 April 2016 April 2016 April 2016 April 2016 September 2016 September 2016 September 2016 October 2015
Corporate Risk and Procurement	Insurance and Risk Assurance Procurement	Graham Mully Tracey Sargent	February 2017 February 2017