



Equality and Diversity Policy

March 2019

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 North West Leicestershire District Council (the Council) prides itself in its proactive approach to equality and diversity which stems from the Social Model of Disability.

The Social Model of Disability takes the focus away from the individual and gives it to the environment (this could be a person, policy or place). With the belief that it is environmental barriers that cause a person to become disabled, the Council has the opportunity to remove such barriers and promote barrier free design by automatically incorporating aids and adaptations to promote inclusion. Although this model is specific to disability, the general principals can be employed to prevent the discrimination of those with other protected characteristics.

With the belief that discrimination has no place within the Council this Policy provides a clear and strong direction, so our staff, partners and stakeholders know what to expect from us and recognise the importance of ensuring the principals of equality and diversity inform key decision-making at every level within the council.

- 1.2 This Equality and Diversity Policy is a public statement of our objectives and approach. This document, which we refer to as the Policy, has been developed to ensure we meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The Policy however, goes much further and contributes to our commitment to equality and diversity with specific focus on:-

- Reinforcing the council's responsibility under the Equality Act 2010, and our role as community leaders, service provider, employer and purchaser of goods and services.
- Developing an action plan to help us ensure equality of opportunity across all sections of the community, and our workforce. To ensure our services to all residents are provided fairly and without discrimination.
- Promoting equality and diversity across our staff and among our residents, to ensure the removal of unfair discrimination and disadvantage, harassment, and to foster good relations, in the workplace and between different community groups.
- Educating all staff at all levels to approach their work with an open mind and to offer support and assistance to others without relying on preconceptions.

2. DEFINITIONS AND EQUALITY TERMS

2.1 WHAT IS EQUALITY

Equality means everyone is treated fairly, with respect and are given fair chances. We realise, individual's needs are sometimes best met in different ways but people must not be unfairly discriminated against. To assist us with this the Government have listed nine protected characteristics in the Equalities Act 2010 and we must all contribute to creating a positive environment where discriminatory practices and unfair discrimination does not happen.

Equality of opportunity, in terms of access to fair and equitable services, is equal treatment and outcomes that meet the needs of the individual.

2.2 WHAT IS DIVERSITY

This refers to the differences which exist between each of us and the need to consider our own unique needs when helping others.

This means understanding how people's differences and likenesses can be used for the benefit of the individual, the organisation and our communities.

People with diverse backgrounds and attitudes may bring a variety of ideas and perceptions and a diverse organisation can draw upon the widest range of experiences so it can listen to and meet the needs of its employees, customers and the community it serves.

2.3 DISCRIMINATION

This refers to when a person is treated less fairly due to a perceived difference they may have. For example, Fred, a senior manager turns down June's application for promotion as a supervisor. June, who is a lesbian, learns this is because Fred believes the team she applied to manage are homophobic. Fred thought June's sexual orientation would prevent her from gaining the team's respect and managing them effectively. This is direct sexual orientation discrimination against June.

2.3 INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION

This occurs when, for example, a rule is applied fairly to all but in fact, the ability of one group to respond to that rule, is much greater than the ability of another. An example of this might be a rule that everyone should apply for something via the internet. This could exclude the older generation who may not have internet access or computer skills.

2.4 POSITIVE ACTION

This refers to any action taken to attempt to put right an imbalance in the makeup of a workforce or deal with existing stereotypes/problems. For example, an organisation may wish to employ more individuals with a disability or those who align themselves as from Black and Minority Ethnic communities, in order to have a more diverse workforce and therefore, encourage people from these protected groups to apply for vacancies, e.g., disabled people are guaranteed an interview if they meet all the essential criteria.

2.5 EQUALITY OF OUTCOME

Refers to an effort to ensure, whatever the level of opportunity, the outcome is roughly the same. For example, this means that some people will need a language translator when speaking to us and others will not. It wouldn't be fair to just provide Spanish translators just because it is the language most people speak. A Spanish translator would not allow a Polish speaker the same access to opportunities. Actions taken to treat someone equally is dependent on their need(s).

2.6 DISCRIMINATION BY ASSOCIATION

This is the form of discrimination which occurs when one person has a protected characteristic, but another person is treated negatively from knowing them. For example, you could be discriminated against because you have a family member or a friend who has a disability. For example, May works as a project manager and is looking forward to a promised promotion. However, after she tells her boss that her mother, who lives at home, has had a stroke, the promotion is withdrawn. This may be discrimination against May because of her association with a disabled person.

2.7 DISCRIMINATION BY PERCEPTION

This refers to discrimination because you believe a person has a protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually have that characteristic. For example, Tom is 45 but looks much younger. Many people assume he is in his mid-20s. He is not allowed to represent his company at an international meeting because the managing director thinks he is too young. Tom has been discriminated against on the perception of a protected characteristic.

2.8 HUMAN RIGHTS

Every person in the world has basic human rights and freedoms. Human rights are based on core principles such as dignity, fairness, equality, respect and independence. They are relevant to day-to-day life and protect people's freedom to control their own lives, effectively take part in decisions made by public authorities which impact upon their rights and get fair and equal services from public authorities.

2.9 COMMUNITY COHESION

A cohesive community can be described as one in which strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds and circumstances and one where different groups of people get on well together. Effective and lasting community cohesion involves appreciating, respecting and positively valuing the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances.

2.10 STEREOTYPE

A simplified idea of what people with certain characteristics are like such as, all French people wear berets and striped T-shirts. Stereotypes can be positive or negative.

3. APPROACH

Research shows that no one is completely free from prejudice. Prejudices manifest themselves during the early years and are influenced by family, the community and the media. We understand this and as such all our staff will undertake bespoke equality training to help them recognise their prejudices and overcome them, as we are aware that prejudice can lead to discrimination.

Although the Equality Act 2010 details nine protected characteristics, the Council understands that our employees and residents do not have to disclose that they hold a specific characteristic. The Council also understand that people who share the same characteristic often have very different needs, and as such our training also covers asking open questions and offering support if required, without assuming the type of support that may be needed.

The Council is also aware that prejudice can lead to acts of hate. Hate incidents and crimes have no place within our district and as such we include Social Inclusion and Community Cohesion within this policy to ensure our approach to equality and diversity is echoed throughout the district.

3.1 EQUALITY STATEMENT

The Equality Statement has been revised to help us promote and advance equality, diversity and community cohesion as part of everything we do. Over the next 4 years, the Council will:

Carry out an equality analysis in relation to: access to services, the effect of services, proposed policies and changes to existing policies, in respect of the nine protected characteristics. To enable us to fully understand our service users and ensure we have paid 'due regard' to those with protected characteristics. The Council will also ensure all members of staff receive face to face equality training which will also form part of staff induction.

The Council will also work towards ensuring:

1. Council services are fair, reasonable and accessible to all our customers, especially those with protected characteristics.
2. Equality and diversity is at the heart of service planning, management and service delivery.
3. Information about our services is offered in suitable formats on request.
4. The council's commissioning, purchasing and grants provisions, policies and procedures are fair and treat all customers equitably.
5. The council understands our employees so we can take actions that ensure fairness and equality of opportunity for all.
6. Elected members are trained through induction, specific training sessions and opportunities to ensure they are aware of this Policy and their own responsibilities and are able to apply it to their own area of work.
7. Information is regularly published on the council website regarding the work the Council is doing to embed and promote equality and diversity in the workplace and for our communities.

3.1 OUR ROLES AS LEADERS

This Policy assists the Corporate Leadership Team, Team (CLT) Managers and Team Leaders, to fully meet the aims set out in the Equality Statement (see 3.1) and to fully realise the equality objectives of the council. All supporting documents, codes of practice, legislative information, monitoring and training will be aimed at helping all employees, to implement the policy effectively, in terms of service delivery and employment practice. These responsibilities are:-

- To provide leadership through CLT who will work with the political leadership in creating an equality and diversity culture within the council.
- For all employees to embrace the principles of equality of opportunity and apply these to their everyday activities.
- Not to harass, abuse or bully any other employee or customer, on the grounds of a protected characteristics.
- For the Equality and Diversity Lead to provide guidance to staff on equality and diversity law, and be pro-active in promoting equality and diversity. The Equalities Coordinator will advise staff on training, monitoring, service and policy reviews, engaging with the community as needed.

3.2 ACCESSIBLE COMMUNICATIONS

We want to encourage communication with people from different communities and make sure we do this in a way that prevents exclusion.

The council will:-

- Talk to people and listen to people in the way they find the easiest and best. We will also help others to do the same.
- Look at ways to raise the profile of equality and diversity through targeted positive communications, equality and diversity events, either as a council, or working in partnership with other organisations and government bodies. Invitations and publicity for events will clearly state the appropriate booking systems to request any facilities or services required.
- Continue to provide information upon request in a number of different formats or community languages and offer to go through a document personally with someone to help them understand it. Alternative formats which may include large print, Braille and audio will be available on request. We will produce a version of this document in Easy Read by the end of March 2019.
- Continue to ensure, where possible that public meetings and events are accessible. This includes providing, upon request, alternative formats for written documents, help with using the hearing system, level access, accessible toilets, where possible assist with the provision with transport to and from the venue, and adequate emergency exit procedures.
- All equality and diversity documents are being reviewed and updated, and will be available on our website by the end of July 2019.

3.3.1 TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION SERVICE

Translation and Interpretation guidance is available to assist officers and our customers in delivering our services. The Council Translation and Interpretation Guidance can be found [online](#).

Interpreters (including sign language interpreters) can be provided where we receive prior notification that they are required. Information about our services can be provided in different formats/languages with advanced notice.

3.3.2 COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

Comments and complaints are encouraged from our customers in any form of communication – by email, telephone, in writing or face-to-face.

The Council has formal processes for the management of complaints to ensure customers receive informed and considered responses in circumstances where they are unhappy with our services. The Council recognises that information from complaints can help us to improve services in the future.

The councils' mission is to put customers at the heart of what is done and how it is done, regardless of how they chose to contact us. We will respond positively to customers' views and actively seek to promote opportunities for customers to tell us what they think and for them to influence future service development and delivery.

4. EQUALITY MONITORING

Equality monitoring is looking at the information that is collected about different services and groups of people. This will tell us how well equality and diversity is embedded in the work we do. It is something we think is very important for understanding our customers. Information about the people who work for us is collected and monitored for the same reason.

The Council's Equality Monitoring Policy tells staff how they can collect information for the protected characteristics. This information will be used to:-

- Understand how many people from different protected characteristics are employed by the council
- Understand how many people from different protected characteristics use our services, or are not using those services.
- Help understand what different groups think about our services and about what can be improved to meet their needs.
- Support service provision, monitor inequalities and demonstrate compliance with legislation.

We have produced a generic equality monitoring form in order to collect equality and diversity information of service users, residents and partners, etc. The equality monitoring form and Policy will be available on our intranet for staff and externally on The Council's website.

5. EMBEDDING EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IN ALL WE DO

5.1 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND WHAT THE LAW SAYS

As a Council we need to show how we meet relevant legislation by publishing specified data on a public facing platform. This law is called the Equality Act 2010, and can be found [online](#).

5.2 THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

The Equality Act 2010 and connected Public Sector Equality Duty are the main equalities legislation, which sets out unlawful ways to treat someone. The law protects people from unfair discrimination on the grounds of nine protected characteristics:-

- 1 Age: relates to a person belonging to a particular age group (e.g. 32 year olds) or a range of ages (e.g. 18 – 30 year olds).
- 2 Disability: defined as having a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long term' negative impact on your ability to do normal daily activities.
- 3 Gender: covers the 'characteristic' of being a man or of being a woman.
- 4 Gender Reassignment: the process of changing from one gender to another. This characteristic covers a person who is intending to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning their gender by changing physiological or other traits of gender.
- 5 Marriage and Civil Partnership: currently, marriage is defined as a 'union between a man and a woman'. Same-sex couples can have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters. Legislation on marriage changed from 13th March 2014 and same-sex marriages started taking place on 29th March 2014.
- 6 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 treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.
- 7 Race: refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins.

- 8 Religion or Belief: religion refers to any religion or lack of religion and belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g., Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.
- 9 Sexual Orientation: whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

It is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of any of these nine 'protected characteristics'.

5.3 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY [PSED]

The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) consists of a general duty which is supported by specific duties. The general duty requires public sector organisations to have due regard to the need to:-

1. **Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.**
This means the Council must stop people from being treated unfairly or differently because of one of the 'protected characteristics', listed in the Equality Act 2010. The council also has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, to also publish our Gender Pay Gap report annually.
2. **Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.**
This means the Council must do its best to meet the needs of people with protected characteristics and stop any unfair treatment suffered by people because of their protected characteristic(s).
3. **Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.**
This means the Council must help people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it, to get on together.

Having 'due regard' means consciously thinking about the aim of the equality duty as part of decision-making processes. This means consideration of equality issues must influence the decisions reached by public bodies, such as, how they act as employers; how they form, evaluate and review policy; how they design, deliver and evaluate services; and how they appoint and procure or obtain goods and services from others.

5.4 SOCIAL COMMUNITY INCLUSION

This Policy includes community cohesion as it is crucial to fostering good relations, which creates a fairer and more equal society and thus tackles Hate. All communities are linked in different ways. No individual community is so different from the rest of society that its particular needs cannot be understood and it is simply about how well everyone gets on and achieves benefits which are desirable for both the communities and within the district and the Council. An emphasis on shared futures rather than different histories will help bring communities together.

To bring about social inclusion and community cohesion we need to improve how services respond to communities and how we engage with people. By working to meet the different needs of those with protected characteristics, we can tackle prejudice and promote understanding between people from different backgrounds. To achieve this, our aim will be to:-

- Ensure access to services for isolated rural communities and for people from priority neighbourhoods and groups at risk of social exclusion.
- Increase the number of people from priority neighbourhoods and priority groups who have the confidence, knowledge and skills to take part in community activity, particularly where taking part by such people is disproportionately low.
- Increase resident participation by enhancing the role of community groups, and to strengthen and develop local leadership.
- Reduce or prevent the impact of harassment (or Hate) suffered by those with protected characteristics, within the wider community or within the workplace.

5.5 EQUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT (EFLG)

The Council is committed to using the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG) as a tool to support us in meeting our legal obligations and to measure the progress we are making towards embedding equality and diversity practice across our organisation. The framework has 3 stages of improvement:-



The Council will ensure the equality principles and legal requirements are embedded within the organisation, progressing the work around equality and diversity, ensuring equity and respect is promoted in all that we do.

Details of the Equality Framework can be found [online](#).

5.6 ASSESSING EQUALITY IMPACT

The Public Sector Equality Duty states there is a duty to analyse our services, policies and procedures to assess how appropriate and accessible they are for people with a protected characteristic and that they do not, without knowing or by mistake, disadvantage or discriminate against any protected group.

5.7 WHAT WE WILL DO

- Use the new Equality Impact Matrix form to do a risk-based equality analysis, to assess services, functions and policies, for their likely or actual effect on people in respect of the protected characteristics. The Equality Impact Matrix form and guidance for completing them will be available upon request on the intranet and website.
- Ensure the equality impact process is robust and supported with a guidance document, which meets the legal requirements and ensure staff and members are trained on how to complete the new Equality Impact Matrix form.
- Equality Impact Assessments that have already been completed for key services, will be made available in summary format via the Council's web site, and made available for formal inspection as required.
- Actions arising from equality analysis and assessments will be reflected in Service Team Plans.

5.8 EQUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE

The Council is committed to all aspects of equal opportunities in employment, including fair employment and equal pay policy.

The Council:

- Promotes opportunities to ensure its workforce is diverse and representative of the local community.
- Ensures council jobs are accessible to people from all sections of the community.
- Ensures all applicants for posts are aware of our equalities policies and of their right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Ensures employees are treated equitably in all areas of employment, including career development, pay, training and promotion.
- Addresses harassment and bullying in the workplace.
- Will seek to improve consultation with staff from the protected groups.
- Continually reviews human resource policies to assess their impact on the protected groups covered by the policy.
- Monitors recruitment, promotion, training, grievances, disciplinary procedures and exit interviews from employment.
- Works with our Trade Union partners in addressing the Council's goals in equalities.

5.9 EMPLOYMENT MONITORING

Information is collected and published on the Council website about the people who work for us: covering age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This includes information about levels of pay, information on applications for jobs and how successful different groups of people have been, staff who started and left the organisation and staff complaints and training.

The information is used to check if any group sharing a protected characteristic is being disadvantaged by any of the council's employment policies or procedures. If this is the case, we try and do things to reduce or prevent this disadvantage.

5.10 EQUALITIES LINKED TO EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

There are a wide range of policies to support people who work for us and future employees. These policies let staff know what is expected from them as employees and what they can expect from the Council as an employer. Equality monitoring starts at the point of application and continues through to minimise any unconscious bias and to help us achieve a workforce that is representative of the district.

The Council staff are active in promoting and supporting diversity in the workforce. This includes:

- Making sure we are fair in what we pay people, through having a non-discriminatory job evaluation scheme;
- Making sure bullying and harassment doesn't happen in the workplace;
- Supporting employees in making sure they have a good balance of work life and home life (work-life balance).

The Council understands the law in respect of reasonable adjustments and our duty as an employer to take such steps as are reasonable to prevent any practice, policy, physical feature of the workplace or any other arrangements being made, which places a disabled employee or applicant at a disadvantage compared to a non-disabled employee or applicant.

5.11 TRAINING

The Council will ensure Elected Members and staff, undertake regular training (e.g. every 3 years, mandatory as part of the induction process) on equality and diversity so they understand what their responsibilities are and how best to prevent discrimination.

5.12 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IN PROCUREMENT

The Council's procurement processes include promotion of social benefits and equality of opportunity for service users, businesses and council staff alike. For each procurement process the procurement team will endeavour to understand the equality impact of the proposed purchase or contract, so that the process being used ensures that the supplier understands and is capable of delivering their duties in respect of equality.

Exactly what is undertaken will be specific to the activity but may include evaluation of supplier policy, understanding of how that policy is implemented and communicated, and how a supplier measures its demographics against the communities it serves.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission provides further information on our procurement role and meeting our equality duty requirements under the Equality Act and PSED.

5.13 ENGAGING AND CONSULTING WITH COMMUNITIES

The Equality Act 2010 requires local authorities to be transparent in their engagement processes and be able to demonstrate this through publishing information about the consultation it has undertaken.

It is important to talk to people/residents in our communities to understand what they need from our services. In order to provide the right services, which better meet the needs of the people using them, the council will:-

- Help people who may be disadvantaged due to a protected characteristic or social exclusion, to take part in activities in their community, and to have their say in consultations about the decisions the council makes about its services and how they are affected. This could be through: surveys, questionnaires, focus groups or open meetings.
- Represent communities at meetings to make sure the views of the community are heard.
- Listen to the opinions and complaints of individuals, local forums, community groups and partners to ensure feedback is taken into account in service provision and policy development.
- Working with other public sector organisations and keeping abreast of new developments in assistive technology that could help us achieve our aims.
- Feedback the results of engagement and consultation to all involved.

The Council's Engagement Strategy is another key document for promoting equality and diversity. It outlines how we will work together to inform, consult and involve local people and our stakeholders in decision making and improving public services in North West Leicestershire.

5.14 EQUALITY GROUPS TO PROMOTE EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

A number of groups have been set up within Leicestershire which work on equality issues across organisations and communities, and help embed equality and diversity in everything we do.

LeicesterShire Equalities Forum (LSEF): This is a group with representatives from across Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, made up of: Local Authorities, Police, De Montfort University, Fire Service, NHS, equality groups who are interested in equality and diversity, and staff who are responsible for equality and diversity as part of their job. These meetings focus on issues relating to equality, diversity, community cohesion and human rights and good practice is shared. This group reports to the Leicestershire County Council, Corporate Equalities Board. Our Equality and Diversity Lead attends and works with this group.

Staff Workers Groups: These groups play an important role in shaping policies and employment initiatives, whilst supporting and responding to issues raised by their group.

- The Councils Equalities and Access Group: This group commenced in July 2017 and includes members and staff who discuss and monitor all aspects of Equality and Diversity, ensuring the Council support those with any of the protected characteristics as listed in the Equalities Act 2010.
- The Council Staff Support Forum: This group is due to be set up in 2019 and is an online informal group of The Council staff who work together to report equality and diversity issues or potential issues. Moderated by the Equalities Lead this enables all staff to have a voice and share best practice.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 POLICY SUMMARY

The Policy recognises the constant diversity changes happening within our community and our organisation, and as such the Council is committed to continually reviewing and improving existing structures and practices. There is a firm commitment to provide equality of opportunity, tackling discrimination, harassment, hate and disadvantage and to fostering good relations. We are also committed to achieving the highest equality standards in service delivery, decision-making and employment practice.

The focus of all aspects of Equalities is the ability to achieve our Equality Statement by 2021.

6.2 PUBLISHING THE RESULTS

We recognise the importance of not only communicating our clear commitment to equality, diversity and social inclusion but also the importance of keeping local people regularly informed of the progress being made and the outcomes being achieved. This includes opportunities for local people to take part in this work and help contribute to the improvements the council is seeking. To help keep local people informed we will:-

- Share results with selected consultation groups.
- Report to the Policy Development Group annually on progress with the action of this Policy.
- We will publish information on our intranet.

- Produce a yearly report of our progress against the Equality themes which are contained within the Equality and Diversity Action Plan and make this available on the council website and in council owned buildings.
- Publish information on the Council website about the Council's work to progress its overall equalities agenda.
- Ensure our reception centres are able to provide leaflets, documents on Council services and information on new initiatives in community languages upon request.

6.3 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

An Action Plan will be developed from the actions and commitments detailed in this Policy with a view to achieving our Equality Statement.

The purpose of the plan is to:-

- Ensure the Council maintains and improves its standards in delivering fair and equitable services to its customers.
- Ensure the Council maintains its focus on our general duty to give 'due regard' to:-
 - Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

END OF POLICY DOCUMENT

Copies of this document are available upon request and can be obtained in large print or translated into other languages, if required.

2019 – 2022 Equality and Diversity Action Plan

Recommendation	Action required	Responsible officer	Date
1. To promote and advance equality, diversity and community cohesion as part of everything we do.			
1.1 Ensure we know our communities.	1) Gather and publish information and data on the profile of our communities and the extent of inequality and disadvantage by developing systems to review soft and hard data/intelligence about communities, their needs and aspirations.	Head of Community Services	May 2019
	2) Have plans in place to collect, share and use equality information with partners.	Equality Lead	June 2019
	3) Have systems to collect, analyse and measure data on how all sections of the community are able to access services.	Head of Customer Services	May 2019
	4) Have appropriate mechanisms in place to ensure that Human Rights considerations are identified when planning services and that customers and residents are treated with dignity and respect.	Equality Lead Extended Leadership Team	May 2019
1.2 Ensure a united approach to Equality and Diversity across the organisation.	1) The Equality & Diversity Lead to provide guidance to staff on equality and diversity law, and be pro-active in promoting equality and diversity through the creation of Equality Champions within each team. The Equality and Diversity Lead will support Equality Champions with training, monitoring, service and policy reviews, engaging with the community and the use of Equality Impact Assessments.	Equality Lead	April 2019
1.3 Ensure committed leadership, partnerships and show good organisational commitment.	1) The political and executive leadership have publicly committed to reducing inequality, fostering good relations and challenging discrimination.	Corporate Leadership Team	April 2019
	2) The Corporate leadership team to provide leadership in creating an equality and diversity culture within the council.	Corporate Leadership Team	April 2019
	3) Decision makers understand what 'equality' means and why it matters locally. Partnership working arrangements are being reviewed with the voluntary and community sector	Chief Executive Extended Leadership Team	April 2019

Recommendation	Action required	Responsible officer	Date
	and the wider community to ensure local priorities are addressed. 4) Equality objectives for the organisation have been set and published in accordance with the requirements of the specific duties to support the public sector Equality Duty. 5) Appropriate structures are in place to ensure delivery and review of equality objectives.	Equality Lead Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development	April 2019 April 2019
1.4 Responsive services and customer care.	1) Have an agreed approach to conducting equality analysis/impact assessment of policy and service decisions. 2) Structures are in place to ensure equality outcomes are integrated into business objectives.	Equalities Lead Extended Leadership Team	May 2019 June 2019
1.5.Ensure council services are fair, reasonable and accessible, to all our customers, especially those with protected characteristics.	1) Establish links to hard to reach communities and residents/groups with a protected characteristic. 2) Work with Communications Team and Team Managers to promote the work and value of those service areas in the harder to reach communities. 3) Review access to engagement events and monitor throughout the period of this action plan.	Head of Community Services All Teams Head of Community Services	December 2019 On Going On Going
1.6.Ensure equality and diversity is part of service planning and policies, management and service delivery. All supporting documents, codes of practice, legislative information, monitoring and training should be aimed at helping all employees, to implement the policy effectively, in terms of service delivery and employment practice.	1) All employees to embrace the principles of equality of opportunity and apply these to their daily work. 2) Not to harass, abuse or bully any other employee or customer, on the grounds of a protected characteristics. 3) Refer to the Equality Framework for local government which will support us in meeting our legal obligations and measure the progress we are making towards embedding equality and diversity practice. 4) Respond positively to customers views, and actively seek to promote opportunities for customers to tell us what they think, and for them to influence future service development and delivery. Publish the results of such contact.	Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development Equality Lead Head of Customer Services	May 2019 On Going On Going On Going
1.7.Ensure information about our services is	1) Upon request, provide interpreters (includes sign language interpreters)	Head of Customer Services	On Going

Recommendation	Action required	Responsible officer	Date
available in suitable formats and languages.	<p>where we receive prior notice that they are required.</p> <p>2) Offer information in different formats and languages on request, including easy read and large print.</p> <p>3) Monitor and report yearly (on our website) on the costs of our translation and interpretation service.</p>	<p>Head of Customer Services</p> <p>Head of Customer Services</p>	<p>On Going</p> <p>Annually</p>
1.8 Ensure the council's commissioning, purchasing and grants provisions, policies and procedures are fair, and treats everyone equitably.	<p>1) Embed greater awareness of equality & diversity issues and embed equality & diversity policies and procedures across all council's functions, e.g., through training (to ensure positive impacts).</p> <p>2) Ensure the procurement processes and system incorporates equality and diversity factors and responsibilities, for how projects are developed and delivered; and creates an 'equal playing field' for smaller, local businesses, and covers the 'Buy it Local' scheme.</p> <p>3) The organisation ensures that procurement and commissioning processes and practice take account of the diverse needs of clients and that providers understand the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.</p> <p>4) Monitor the work of contractors (via procurement).</p>	<p>All Teams via Equality Champions</p> <p>Head of Finance</p> <p>Head of Finance</p> <p>Head of Finance</p>	<p>May 2019</p> <p>June 2019</p> <p>June 2019</p> <p>June 2019</p>
1.9 Develop a skilled committed workforce	<p>1) Understand our local labour market, the barriers faced by those from vulnerable or marginalized individuals and groups and the impact these have on achieving a diverse workforce.</p> <p>2) Design a workforce strategy to include priority equality considerations and objectives. Specific and measurable employment targets will be set to improve workforce diversity.</p> <p>3) Put systems in place to collect and analyse employment data across a range of practices (recruitment, training, leavers, grievance and disciplinaries etc.)</p> <p>4) Ensure all employment policies and procedures comply with equality legislation and employment codes of</p>	<p>Head of Economic Regeneration</p> <p>Head of Human Resources and Operational Development</p> <p>Head of Human Resources and Operational Development</p> <p>Head of Human Resources and</p>	<p>September 2019</p> <p>July 2019</p> <p>July 2019</p> <p>August 2019</p>

Recommendation	Action required	Responsible officer	Date
	practice and assess new/changing policies for impact on people with protected characteristics.	Operational Development	September 2019
	5) Review and publish employee data in compliance with our public sector equality duty, e.g., levels of pay, jobs applications information for different groups of people and how successful they have been.	Head of Human Resources and Operational Development	August 2019
	6) Ensure applicants for posts are aware of our equalities policies, and when requested make applications packs accessible in suitable formats, to encourage applicants from underrepresented communities.	Head of Human Resources and Operational Development	June 2019
	7) Ensure a range of inclusive structures are in place to engage and involve more staff.	Head of Economic Regeneration	August 2019
	8) Assess all aspects of the working environment to ensure that the needs of all its employees are met.	Head of Human Resources and Operational Development	September 2019
	9) Maintain equal pay implementation.	Head of Human Resources and Operational Development	July 2019
	10) Ensure policies and systems are in place to identify, prevent and deal effectively with bullying and harassment at work.	Head of Human Resources and Operational Development	August 2019
	11) Ensure equality consideration for individuals are integrated into appraisal systems.	Head of Human Resources and Operational Development	July 2019
	12) Carry out a regular assessment of training and learning and development needs required to ensure our members and officers are equipped to understand their equality duties and take action to deliver equality outcomes.	Head of Human Resources and Operational Development	
		Head of Human Resources and Operational Development	
1.10 Train all staff through induction, specific training sessions and opportunities to ensure they are aware of this policy and their own responsibilities, and are able to apply it to their own area of work.	1) All staff to initially receive face to face training using a top down approach, allowing the Councils equalities ethos to be imparted and a thorough understanding of individual's responsibilities.	Head of Human Resources and Operational Development	May 2019
	2) Deliver face to face equalities training as part of new staff induction.	Equalities Lead	May 2019
	3) Team managers to ensure their staff have corporate training, and equality	Extended Leadership Team	

Recommendation	Action required	Responsible officer	Date
	and diversity training needs are discussed at yearly appraisals.		
1.11 Train Elected Members through induction, specific training sessions and opportunities to ensure they are aware of this policy and their own responsibilities	1) Train all members at the start of their term of office in the Councils approach to Equality and Diversity and their responsibilities as Elected Members.	Equalities Lead	May 2019
1.12 Regularly publish information on the council website showing the councils progress in embedding and promoting equality and diversity in the workplace and for our communities.	1) Raise the profile of equality and diversity through targeted positive communications and events, as a council, working in partnership with other agencies, e.g., annual Equality and Diversity week (November). 2) Share results with selected consultation groups. 3) Report to the Policy and Performance Committee every six months on progress on this Action Plan. 4) Produce a yearly report of our progress against the Equality themes which are contained within the Equality and Diversity Action Plan and make this available on the council website and in council owned buildings. 5) Ensure other equality and diversity documents, are still relevant to current Equality Act legislation, etc. The Disability Equality Scheme and Race Equality Scheme need to be updated when necessary and put on our website. Complete the consultation process and seek approval from Corporate Leadership Team for implementation.	Equalities Lead Communications Team Equalities Lead Equalities Lead Equalities Lead Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development	March 2019 July 2019 On Going Annually September 2019
2. Community Engagement and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)			
2.1 Enhance community engagement to: tackle discrimination, prejudice, meet the needs between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, foster good relations, and promote understanding between people from different backgrounds.	1) The organisation has a clear understanding of the level of participation in public life by different communities/protected characteristics. 2) Establish and reduce potential barriers to engagement. 3) Ensure structures are in place within the organisation and across partnerships to understand community relationships and map community tensions.	Head of Community Services Head of Community Services Extended Leadership Team	May 2019 August 2019 September 2019 August 2019

Recommendation	Action required	Responsible officer	Date
	4) Help people who may be disadvantaged to have their say in consultations about the decisions the council makes about its services and how they are affected. Use surveys, questionnaires, focus groups or open meetings.	Extended Leadership Team	August 2019
	5) Consult on policies, services, needs, etc., with existing equality groups, e.g., LeicesterShire Equality Forum (County Hall), NWL Equality and Access Group; LCC groups: Disabled Workers Group, BME group and Mind. Ensuring we share engagement structures/mechanisms with our partners so as to avoid 'consultation overload'.	Strategic Director of Place Strategic Director of Housing and Customer Services	May 2019
	6) Seek to implement a transport provision as and when required to ensure participation in meetings and consultation events by residents with protected characteristics.	Extended Leadership Team	June 2019
	7) Represent communities at meetings to make sure the views of the community are heard. Listen to the opinions and complaints of individuals, local forums, community groups and partners to ensure feedback is taken into account in service and policy development.	Extended Leadership Team	October 2019
		Extended Leadership Team	On Going
	8) Feedback the results of engagement and consultation to all involved.	Extended Leadership Team	On Going
	9) Ensure communications promote a clear commitment to advancing equality and fostering good relations across all local communities.	Equalities Lead Business Focus Team	
	10) Raise awareness of those with protected characteristics as a valuable part of the workforce to businesses in our District.	Communications Team	
2.2 Encourage communication with people from different communities in a way that helps them to take part in consultations, give confidence, knowledge and skills to take part in community activities.	1) Talk to people and listen to people in the way they find the easiest and best.	Extended Leadership Team	May 2019
	2) Help staff to produce literature and documents in accessible formats, e.g., easy read, plain English.	Equalities Lead	May 2019
	3) Continue to ensure public meetings and events are accessible. This includes providing, upon request, alternative formats for written	Extended Leadership Team	

Recommendation	Action required	Responsible officer	Date
	<p>documents, and personally going through a document to help them understand it, using the induction hearing loop system, level access, accessible toilets, where possible, transport to and from the venue, and adequate emergency exit procedures.</p> <p>4) Encourage comments, complaints and compliments from customers and residents, as this will help us collect and monitor opinions about our services and staff, as well as help us understand the diversity of our residents.</p>	Extended Leadership Team	<p>April 2019</p> <p>September 2019</p>
3. Achieve the Local Government Association Equality Framework at the developing level.	<p>1) Completion of the above action plan and mock peer review for LGA Framework.</p> <p>2) Submission for LGA peer review.</p>	<p>Equalities Lead</p> <p>Equalities Lead</p>	<p>December 2019</p> <p>February 2020</p>

End