

REPORT TO:	FINANCE & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 8
DATE OF MEETING:	14 MARCH 2024	CATEGORY: RECOMMENDED
REPORT FROM:	STRATEGIC DIRECTOR (CORPORATE RESOURCES)	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	FIONA PITTAM fiona.pittam@southderbyshire.gov.uk	DOC:
SUBJECT:	EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION POLICY	
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: FM05

1.0 Recommendation

1.1 That Committee approve the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion policy (Appendix 1).

2.0 Purpose of the Report

2.1 To present an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion policy for approval that sets out how the Council will treat people fairly, reduce inequalities in South Derbyshire, and comply with statutory and other obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation covering equality and human rights.

2.2 The Council acknowledges and welcomes its legal obligations as the minimum standard to achieve and through this Policy and its EDI Strategy 2021-25 and Action Plan will work toward improving and maintaining standards and be accountable to the community we serve.

3.0 Detail

3.1 The Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy sets out the Council's commitment to providing an inclusive and supportive environment for residents, employees, Elected Members, contractors, partners and visitors that is free from discrimination and where people can choose how they want to live their lives. As a public body, the Council also has legal requirements that it needs to comply with under the Equality Act 2010 but most importantly it needs to position itself as a community leader for equality, diversity, and inclusion.

3.2 The Council adopted a Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2021-25 and an action plan that is reviewed and updated annually to progress and monitor its performance. An annual report is produced each year to evidence the work being completed by the Council and its partners that is published on the Council's website.

- 3.3 The proposed EDI Policy has been subject to consultation with internal and external partners on the EDI Steering Group and with the Trade Unions. The feedback received included ensuring that consistent terms are used when referencing the nine protected characteristics as provided in the Equality Act 2010 and to reference the statutory duties placed on public sector organisations, both have been included in the Policy.
- 3.4 The Policy provides details on how the Council will deliver its services, take action to address any complaints of discrimination, harassment and victimisation in service delivery and employment and has further information on external groups and organisations that can support people.
- 3.5 Equality, diversity, and inclusion is an integral part of everyday life for us at the Council as service provider, employer and through our partnership working. We are committed to putting EDI at the centre of our decision-making processes to ensure we can best meet the needs of our residents and community.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 None directly arising directly from the report.

5.0 Corporate Implications

Employment Implications

- 5.1 The Policy provides information on the actions to be progressed to support employees and continue to work towards a workforce that is representative of the community.

Legal Implications

- 5.2 Failure to comply with a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 could result in legal proceedings being brought by individuals, Trade Unions, the Equality & Human Rights Commission and/or other statutory organisations.

Corporate Plan Implications

- 5.3 One of our corporate values is; “We have respect for everyone” and through this Policy the Council will continue to progress its work to place equality, diversity, and inclusion as a prime consideration in the delivery of services for residents and how it employs people.

Risk Impact

- 5.4 These have been considered and incorporated into the proposed Policy.

6.0 Community Impact

Consultation

- 6.1 The Policy has been presented to EDI Steering Group and the Trade Unions at the Joint Negotiating Committee to receive feedback and information. These have been included in the Policy as appropriate.

Equality and Diversity Impact

6.2 An Equality Impact assessment (EIA) is attached (appendix 2).

Social Value Impact

6.3 The Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy, alongside the EDI Strategy 2021-25 and Action Plan will demonstrate how the Council is advancing equality, meeting its statutory obligations and make society fairer for everyone.

Environmental Sustainability

6.4 None directly arising from this report.

7.0 Conclusions

7.1 The Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy sets out how the Council will treat people fairly, reduce inequalities in South Derbyshire, and comply with statutory and other obligations. It has been subject to consultation with internal and external partners.

7.2 The approval of the Policy will further embed the importance of equality, diversity, and inclusion in the services provided by the Council and enhance its reputation as a community leader.

8.0 Background Papers

8.1 Full Council 24 February 2021 - Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2021-25 and Action Plan.