

Introduction

Dorset County Council is committed to the principles of diversity, inclusion and equality¹ in both employment and the delivery of services. This means making our services accessible for all, treating people fairly and providing a fully inclusive working environment.

The Dorset Equality Scheme aims to embed the principles of diversity, inclusion and equality in everything that Dorset County Council does. We do this in the spirit of our Corporate Plan: Working Together for a Strong and Successful Dorset and its principles of fairness, openness, respect, effectiveness and innovation - seeking to improve the lives of both our workforce and the people of Dorset by ensuring they are Safe, Healthy, Independent and Prosperous.

The Dorset Equality Scheme details the key equality objectives for 2018-19, it also demonstrates the work that Dorset County Council is doing to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Overview - Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation. The act sets out the different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone, such as direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation and failing to make a reasonable adjustment for a disabled person, the act prohibits unfair treatment in the workplace and when providing goods, facilities and services. The act also protects people from being treated less favourably because of certain characteristics. These are known as 'protected characteristics'².

In addition, Section 149 (Public Sector Equality Duty) of the Equality Act sets both general and specific duties to which public bodies are legally bound. The General Duty requires the council to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

¹ Diversity is about recognising, respecting and valuing a wide set of people's differences and understanding that the opportunities we get are impacted by characteristics beyond those by legislation.

Inclusion means removing barriers and taking steps to create equality, harness diversity produce safe, welcoming communities and cultures
Equality means people being treated fairly and with respect.

² Age, Disability, Race, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Religion or Belief, Sexual orientation

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Dorset County Council – Dorset Equality Scheme 2018-19

- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

In addition, the General Equality Duties are supported by two specific duties:

- Publish information to evidence their compliance with the general duties
- Prepare and publish one or more equality objectives, every four years to demonstrate how the council is meeting the aims of the general equality duty.

The Dorset Equality Scheme sets out Dorset County Council's Equality Objectives, which have developed with the support of:

- Diversity & Inclusion Members Group

and feedback from:

- Directorate Diversity Action Groups
- Staff Support Groups
- Forum for Equality & Diversity (FED)
- Unions

The Equality Objectives identified aim to champion diversity, inclusion and equality within Dorset County Council and with partners across wider Dorset. The outcomes from the objectives will be monitored on a regular basis by the Diversity & Inclusion Members Group, the Corporate Inequalities Group and the Forum for Equality and Diversity. Performance against the delivery of the Objectives will also be formally reported to Cabinet every six months.

It is important to note that these equality objectives do not cover all the work that is being carried out by the Council with the aim of improving diversity, inclusion and equality in Dorset.

Further information about equality and diversity in Dorset can be found { HYPERLINK
"https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/equalityanddiversity" }

Dorset Equality Scheme - Equality Objectives

Equality Objective (EO)		Proposed actions	Lead	Target Date	Success Indicators
EO1	To ensure that good quality Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) are conducted on any changes of policy, project, strategy and service.	<p>Review the EqIA system and procedures to strengthen the quality assurance of EqIAs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting the EqIA process and online training • Developing a library of example EqIAs • Ensuring that all EqIAs are reviewed and signed off by relevant Directorate Diversity Action Groups (DDAGs) • Monitoring cumulative impacts on protected characteristics • Monitoring review dates • Publishing EqIAs on Dorset For You 	D&I Officer & DDAG leads	September 2018	<p>Regular monitoring of EqIAs by the Inequalities Group including the monitoring cumulative impacts.</p> <p>Increase in the number of people completing online EqIA training.</p> <p>EqIAs are available on D4U and accessible in other formats when required.</p>
EO2	To provide fair pay to council employees	Ensure that the Gender Pay Gap data is collected annually and submitted to central government.	HR	March 2019	Publishing gender pay data in accordance with central government requirements.
EO3	To develop and support a diverse workforce.	<p>Collate and publish workforce equality monitoring data on a quarterly basis</p> <p>Analyse data to develop appropriate improvement plans</p> <p>Use the results of the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index to develop and implement an improvement plan.</p> <p>Provide support to the Staff Support Leads in their roles of facilitating staff support groups.</p>	<p>HR</p> <p>D&I Officer</p> <p>D&I Officer, HR, DDAG Leads</p> <p>D&I Officer</p>	<p>On-going</p> <p>July 2018</p> <p>On-going</p>	<p>To be legally compliant with the Equality Act.</p> <p>Improve the overall score results in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index for 2018-19.</p> <p>Staff support groups meet regularly.</p>

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Equality Objective (EO)	Proposed actions	Lead	Target Date	Success Indicators	
		Promoting and facilitating events and initiatives which promote diversity, inclusion and wellbeing.	D&I Officer, Staff Support Groups, HR, Health & Wellbeing Officer	On-going	Appropriate measures to evaluate events e.g. feedback, numbers.
EO4	To ensure that appropriate Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) training is completed by staff and elected members.	<p>Report mandatory training uptake to Corporate Working Group</p> <p>Provide appropriate D&I training to Directorate Diversity Action Groups</p> <p>Ensure that on-line modules are up to date with relevant links.</p> <p>Create regular opportunities to engage with elected members by providing training and briefings on Diversity & Inclusion issues.</p>	<p>D&I Officer, Learning & OD</p> <p>D&I Officer, Learning & OD</p> <p>HR, D&I Officer</p> <p>D&I Officer, Democratic Services</p>	<p>July 2018</p> <p>June 2018</p> <p>June 2018</p>	<p>Staff will be aware of their responsibilities regarding their equality duties.</p> <p>Elected members will be aware of their responsibilities regarding their equality duties.</p>
EO5	Continue to strengthen our relationship with Dorset communities.	<p>Work collaboratively with partnerships (e.g. Forum for Equality & Diversity (FED), Gypsy & Traveller Liaison Group, Prejudice Free Dorset, Anti-Slavery Partnership) and other associated partnership projects.</p> <p>Promote and support key diversity events held across Dorset.</p>	D&I Officer, Community Safety Team Member Champion for Diversity	<p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p>	<p>Reporting to the Inequalities Group on partnership working and joint initiatives.</p> <p>Appropriate measures to evaluate events e.g. feedback, numbers.</p>
EO6	Building Equality and Diversity into the commissioning process	Developing guidance to ensure that Equality, Diversity & Inclusion are adequately and appropriately considered during the commissioning process.	D&I Officer Commissioning	March 2019	Guidance notes implemented.

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