

Dorset Council Equality Scheme

Dorset Council is committed to the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion in both employment and the delivery of services. The Dorset Council Equality Scheme details the key equality objectives for 2019-2023, it also demonstrates the work that Dorset Council is doing to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The Legal Framework - Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits unfair treatment in the workplace and when providing goods, facilities and services and 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 also protects people from being treated less favourably because of certain characteristics. These are known as 'protected characteristics'¹.

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

In addition, the General Duty is supported by two specific duties to:

- Publish information to evidence the Council's compliance with the general duties; and
- 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 Council Equality Scheme will be supported by a detailed action plan and will be reviewed annually. A working group will monitor the delivery of the equality scheme through regular updates on performance indicators and regular progress reports on the action plan.

It is important to note that these equality objectives relate specifically to meeting the Council's legal obligations and that further work is being carried out by Dorset Council with the aim of improving equality, diversity and inclusion across Dorset.

Further information about equality and diversity in Dorset can be found [here](#).

¹ Age, Disability, Race, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Religion or Belief, Sexual orientation

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Equality Objective	Aim	Key Actions
EO1	Fostering good relations with and within the community	<p>To foster good relations and promote understanding between people from different groups and backgrounds across Dorset.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop and use up-to-date data on Dorset Council's communities. • Engaging with partners on equality, diversity and inclusion issues e.g. Gypsy & Traveller Liaison Group, Prejudice Free Dorset, Anti-Slavery Partnership and other associated partnerships. • Promote and support key diversity events held across Dorset. • Implement an Accessibility Strategy for school age pupils with a disability. • Work with partners to deliver the Dorset Syrian Resettlement Programme. • Provide public information in the most appropriate and accessible way.
EO2	Developing and supporting a diverse workforce	<p>To make Dorset Council an employer for all, where staff are engaged, valued and able to reach their potential.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that gender pay gap data is collected and published on an annual basis. • Collate and publish workforce equality monitoring data on an annual basis. • Ensure that appropriate equality & diversity training is completed by staff. • Identify regular opportunities to engage with members on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion issues by providing training, support and briefings. • Ensure that new Members receive equality and diversity training when elected.

Equality Objective		Aim	Key Actions
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and support the development of staff support networks. • Promote and facilitate equality, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing events and initiatives. • Work with external benchmarking organisations, such as Disability Confident, Stonewall and Mindful Employer to ensure that the Council is a leader in equality, diversity and inclusion.
EO3	Developing, commissioning and delivering inclusive and responsiveness services	To ensure that services are delivered in an appropriate and cost-effective way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrying out robust and meaningful Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) on new or changes of: policy; projects; strategy; and service. • Ensuring that EqIAs are signed off and published and that review arrangements are in place. • Promoting our commitment to equality and diversity throughout the commissioning and procurement process.