

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to the Executive for Decision 07 November 2022

Portfolio:	Policy and Resources
Subject:	Updated Equalities Objectives 2022-26
Report of:	Director of Leisure and Community
Corporate Priorities:	Dynamic, Prudent and Progressive Council

Purpose:
To agree the Fareham Borough Council Equalities Objectives for 2022-2026.

Executive summary:
The Equalities Act 2010 requires local authorities to publish at least one Equality Objective, and that these be renewed every four years. The current published objectives were implemented in 2017 to run until 2021. Proposals for updated objectives to run to 2026 are presented for approval.

Recommendation/Recommended Option:
It is recommended that the Executive agrees the Fareham Borough Council Equalities Objectives for 2022-2026, as detailed in this report.

Reason:
To ensure ongoing Council compliance with the Equalities Act 2010.

Cost of proposals:
Within current budget.

Appendices: None

Background papers: None

Reference papers: None

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Executive Briefing Paper

Date:	07 November 2022
Subject:	Updated Equalities Objectives 2022-26
Briefing by:	Director of Leisure and Community
Portfolio:	Policy and Resources

INTRODUCTION

1. This report presents updated Equality Objectives for Fareham Borough Council, replacing the current published objectives which covered the period 2017-2021.

BACKGROUND

2. The Equality Act 2010 requires each Council to publish at least one Equality Objective. These are to be renewed every four years. The current Council Equality Objectives were implemented in 2017 to run until 2021 and focus on:
 - Monitoring the diversity of employees and customers, where appropriate, to understand who is and isn't accessing services or employed by the Council.
 - Improving awareness and understanding of hate crime and methods of reporting within the Borough.
3. There has been a delay in reviewing the current objectives as a result of additional resource pressures throughout the COVID pandemic. In reviewing the objectives, a study of comparator local authorities was undertaken.
4. The proposal below aims to build further on the current objectives to ensure the provision of accessible services and support without the creation of significant additional administrative burdens.

PROPOSED EQUALITY OBJECTIVES 2022-2026

5. Three Equality Objectives are proposed for 2022-2026:
 - a. **Improve our understanding of Fareham's community, enabling the Council to meaningfully engage in decision making.**
 - i. Use census 2021 data and other statistical sources to better understand our customers

- ii. Record protected characteristics as part of consultation and engagement proportionally where appropriate
 - iii. Ensure our communications, engagement and consultation is accessible to all residents
- b. **Celebrate diversity and promote inclusion across our community, ensuring Fareham Borough Council services are accessible to all members of our community.**
 - i. Promote and celebrate the cultures within our community and voluntary sector
 - ii. Work in partnership with One Community and other agencies to promote access to advice and services
 - iii. Promote the availability of inclusive services across the Borough
- c. **Embed an inclusive mindset across Fareham Borough Council.**
 - i. Review and update equalities training material and plans for our staff
 - ii. Outline our approach to equality as part of induction package for both new staff and Members
 - iii. Provide training for staff, appropriate to roles and responsibilities
 - iv. Promote a culture of equality within the Council, nurturing diversity

MONITORING AND USE

6. Using the most up to date census data from 2021 as it emerges allows us to understand the demographics across Fareham, and the way our community is evolving. This supports us to engage proportionally and appropriately, ensuring that the way the Council works and the services we deliver meet all our resident's needs, now and in the future. This data is feeding directly into the development of the new Corporate Strategy 2023-29, including our vision and corporate priorities.
7. Recording protected characteristics as part of consultations will feed directly into decision making tools such as Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs). It will help to ensure that we are aware of the potential impact on discreet groups when introducing or changing significant policies allowing us to adjust where reasonable.
8. Celebrating diversity and promoting inclusion by working with the community and voluntary groups, supports us to deliver strong, safe, inclusive, and healthy communities by giving people greater influence over decisions that affect their lives.
9. One Community have recently started using software to record the data they capture when they are meeting and talking to residents, groups, and organisations. Using this will support them to better understand the local community. This knowledge can be shared with the Council and other agencies to promote targeted access to advice and services and monitoring performance.
10. All new Members currently receive an overview of the Council's approach to equalities

as part of their induction. If approved, all new employees will receive a similar overview as part of their induction packages. More in-depth training will be provided to appropriate staff, supported by dedicated online information.

11. This approach will help ensure we are well placed to provide the best experience for our customers, whilst making the Council a more attractive and supportive employer and desirable place to work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

12. That the Executive agrees the three Equality Objectives presented, to be implemented in 2022/23 and run until 2026.

CONCLUSION

13. The Council's proposed Equality Objectives will run to 2026 and help us adhere to our duties in the Equalities Act 2010, whilst providing accessible services and support for our residents, staff, and Members.

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Kat Hillman. (Ext 4443)