

Three Rivers District Council

Equalities Sub -Committee Report

**Equalities Diversity & Inclusion Policy
2023-26 DRAFT**

Date 14th March 2023

EQUALITIES SUB-COMMITTEE - 14 MARCH 2023

PART I

7. EQUALITIES, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY 2023-26 DRAFT (EHoS)

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report provides Members with the opportunity to comment on and input into the draft Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion policy prior to stakeholder and community engagement.

2 Details

- 2.1 The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) introduced a number of responsibilities for councils, including a public sector equality duty and a requirement to promote equality of opportunity between those with “protected characteristics” and others. The public sector equality duty requires that the Council, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to:

2.1.1 Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act

2.1.2 Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

2.1.3 Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- 2.2 The nine legally protected characteristics are: disability, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or belief, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

- 2.3 The Act also introduced specific duties for public bodies to publish Equality Objectives and an annual report to show their compliance with the duty.

- 2.3.1 The Council currently has in place a Comprehensive Equality Policy which was last approved in 2018 and is therefore due for review.

3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act (2010) the Council has a duty to have policies and procedures in place in relation to the achievement of its equalities objectives. It is good practise for the council to regularly review and as necessary refresh its policy documents. No other options were considered.

4 Policy Implications

- 4.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council’s agreed policy and budgets. The relevant policy is the [Comprehensive Equalities Policy](#) and was agreed in July 2018. If progressed to approval through the appropriate council governance channels this new (draft) policy will replace and override the 2018 policy.

- 4.2 In 2022, as part of the review of the current equality policy, this Committee and the Councils Policy and Resources Committee approved revised equality objectives for the period 2022-2026 which are:

- 4.2.1 To promote equality of opportunity in employment & training
 - 4.2.2 To improve equality and access to services for all residents
 - 4.2.3 To strengthen knowledge and understanding of all Three Rivers communities.
 - 4.2.4 To celebrate diversity, promote inclusion and enhance community life in partnership with communities
- 4.3 The objectives above and the findings of the Equality Duty Information report (Agenda item 6 of this Committee meeting agenda) have informed the development of a new (Draft) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy which proposes to cover the period of the newly approved Corporate Framework 2023-26.

5 Financial, Staffing, Customer Services Centre, Communications and Website, Climate Change and Sustainability Implications

- 5.1 None specific to this report.

6 Legal Implications

- 6.1 Under the Equality Act (2010) the Council has a specific duties in relation to equalities. This policy provides an up to date framework under which the council can fulfil those duties.

7 Equal Opportunities Implications

- 7.1 The projects, work streams and policy contained within the report all contribute to the Council positively fulfilling its duties and realising its ambitions under the Equality Act (2010) and related legislation as well as its own Corporate Framework.

8 Community Safety and Public Health Implications

- 8.1 A number of actions both supported and proposed within the revised policy exist to improve community safety (e.g. work streams to prevent and address hate crime) and the overall health and wellbeing (e.g. work streams to address health inequalities) of the district's residents.

9 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

- 9.1 The Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion policy has been developed to ensure that the council can continue to meet its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and to avoid the legal and reputational risks associated with non-compliance.

10 Recommendations

That the Sub Committee:

- 10.1 Provide any comments its wishes to make on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Appendix A)
 - 10.1.1 Approve that a public engagement be undertaken on the draft policy prior to a final policy being presented to Policy and Resources Committee for adoption.

Report prepared by: Emma Sheridan, Head of Community Partnerships

Data Quality

Data sources: Census 2021 Results, ONS, Council Services Equalities Monitoring.

Data checked by: Emma Sheridan, Head of Community Partnerships

Data rating: High

Background Papers

[TRDC Comprehensive Equalities Policy](#)

APPENDICES

- A. TRDC Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2023-26 Draft

