

Isle of Wight Council
EQUALITY OBJECTIVES
ACTION PLAN
2015 to 2018

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Equality Act 2010 And Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act (2010) replaces previous anti-discrimination laws with a single act. It now incorporates the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. This enables the law to be easier to understand and comply with, but also helps to tackle discrimination and inequality.

Following the introduction of The Equality Act (2010) the council is now required to undertake specific duties:

- 1) It has to publish information to show compliance with the equality duty, at least annually; and
- 2) set and publish equality objectives, at least once every four years.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the act) came into force on 5 April 2011, and the Equality Duty applies to public bodies and others carrying out public functions. The duty has three aims. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

This duty enables the support of good decision making by ensuring that all public bodies consider how people in the community will be affected by their activities. This means that the Isle of Wight Council must consider the needs of people before changing, introducing or ending a particular policy, strategy or service.

The Equality Objectives

The council's overall vision is for the Island to be a great place to live, work and visit.

In supporting this vision the Isle of Wight Council has adopted three equality objectives:

- To consider the needs of community and staff when making decisions
- To ensure reasonable and proportionate treatment of its customers
- To apply robust Equality and Diversity requirements in the commissioning and management of procured services

Following public consultation these Equality Objectives were approved by the Isle of Wight Council's Executive on 24th March 2015.

To identify how these objectives will be met an Equality Objectives Action Plan has been produced and can be found in Appendix 1. This plan will run from 2015 to 2018 and will be reviewed on a six monthly basis to ascertain progress.

To help the Isle of Wight Council to meet these objectives the following measures are in place;

- **Strategic Equality and Diversity Board** – comprises of service managers and trade union representatives. The board has the responsibility to lead the strategic direction of Equality and Diversity matters, including ensuring that the Equality Objectives are met.

This includes reviewing the position of Equality Impact Assessments, devising learning and other interventions as well as maintaining an overview of equality and diversity strategy and policy development.

- **Staff Equality Group** – comprises of staff and trade union representatives. This group meets to assist in the delivery and review of the Equality Objectives Action Plan and the group also considers staffing issues in respect of equality and diversity, providing support and advice where appropriate.

The group is not only involved in consultation and consideration of new and established council processes, but it also has a social and pastoral function that supports the promotion of equality and diversity issues.

Further information on Equality and Diversity and how the Council meets its statutory duty can be found by visiting the following website <https://www.iwight.com/Council/Working-for-the-Council/Equality-and-Diversity/Introduction/> or contacting the resources department via telephone on 01983 821000.

Appendix 1 – Equality Objectives Action Plan

Objective	Action	Expected Outcome	Responsibility	Timescales	Resources	Monitored By	Review of Progress (6 monthly)
To consider the needs of community and staff when making decisions	Publish data and information	This will include known information about our workforce and the local community. The information is analysed and circulated for comment and discussion, as well as being published. The intention is that this information will help us to make informed decisions and individual action plans will emerge from this.	Human Resources will produce and publish an annual report on the diversity makeup of the workforce. Public Health collate and report on the equality and diversity demographic of the Isle of Wight	Completed and reviewed as part of an annual cycle – this is an ongoing responsibility All information is published annually Iwight.com	Officer time	Strategic Equality and Diversity Board	
	Undertake Equality Impact Assessments	These assessments will identify whether proposals to change, review or create policies and procedures have a positive, negative or neutral impact and how we should respond accordingly.	Equality Impact Assessments are completed by service leads across the Council	Currently undertaken as part of quarterly board meetings and Equality Impact Assessments are published on Iwight.com	Officer time	Strategic Equality and Diversity Board	
	Promote good relations	This means that we act in a non-discriminatory manner and encourage others to do the same	All members of staff will behave in a non-discriminatory manner and materials published on the Council's computer network, as well as though e-learning and other training support this. Materials are reviewed by the Strategic Equality and Diversity Board and the Staff Equality and Diversity Group and actions facilitated by the Strategic Lead for Organisational Development.	Materials published (Equality Statement and Policy), E-learning module available to all staff. Further training on Equality Essentials, Equality Impact Assessments and Managing Diversity have all been commissioned for delivery January 2015 onwards as a rolling programme.	Officer time Corporate training budget?	Strategic Equality and Diversity Board Staff Equality and Diversity Group	
To ensure reasonable and proportionate treatment of its customers	Provide appropriate training and awareness raising	We will ensure that people who deliver services by or on behalf of the council understand the	All members of staff will behave in a non-discriminatory manner and materials published on the Council's computer network, as well as	E-learning module available to all staff. Further training on Equality Essentials, Equality Impact Assessments and	Officer time Corporate training budget?	Strategic Equality and Diversity Board Staff Equality and Diversity Group	

Objective	Action	Expected Outcome	Responsibility	Timescales	Resources	Monitored By	Review of Progress (6 monthly)
		importance and responsibilities associated with Equality and Diversity issues	through e-learning and other training support this. Materials are reviewed by the Strategic Equality and Diversity Board and the Staff Equality and Diversity Group and actions facilitated by the Strategic Lead for Organisational Development. Workforce Development will provide appropriate learning and the Staff group will produce promotional and campaign materials to raise awareness around compliance and good practice.	Managing Diversity have all been commissioned for delivery January 2015 onwards as a rolling programme. Monitoring will be undertaken of the take up of learning on a quarterly basis.			
	Provide complaints processes	We will ensure that all complaints are received and dealt with in a fair and non-discriminatory manner	Corporate processes (Human Resources) exist for complaints to be recorded, and routes agreed for complaints to be escalated, investigated and resolved	Processes need to be better promoted and made more cohesive. Staff Equality Group will appoint a complaints monitoring officer to collate any E&D related complaint issues and escalate them to the Strategic Equality and Diversity Board for scrutiny and follow on action.	Officer time	Staff Equality and Diversity Group Strategic Equality and Diversity Board	
	Provide accessible materials and services through various transactional channels that do not discriminate on unjustifiable grounds	We will make sure that the means that are available for people to access services and information or to communicate with us are made as accessible as possible	The Strategic Lead for Organisational Development will undertake a review of the range of materials published and promoted and services provided by the Council. This will include making recommendations for improvements in respect of accessibility. The Strategic Equality and Diversity Board will hold services to account and monitor progress in respect of accessibility for all members of our community. The Staff Equality and Diversity Group will provide one to one support to staff	Work to commence in Summer 2015 for a completion date of Winter 2015 and actions delivered in Spring 2016 for review thereafter on a quarterly basis. Actions will include a review of the E&D pages on Wightnet (council's intranet), undertaken by the Staff Equality and Diversity Group to make it more user friendly.	Officer time	Strategic Equality and Diversity Board	
To apply robust Equality and Diversity requirements in the	Provide consistent commissioning and procurement	We will make information regarding our expectations in respect of	The requirements of providing goods and services to the Isle of Wight Council in respect of robust	Current processes reviewed in July 2014. Publishing of guidance to be completed in	Officer time	Strategic Equality and Diversity Board	

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commissioning and management of procured services	guidelines that are available to the public	Equality and Diversity available	Equality and Diversity processes by suppliers is formally built into our procurement processes. The Strategic Lead for Organisational Development will assist the Commissioning and Procurement Service to clearly promote these requirements through our website and other procurement channels.	Summer 2015.			
	Set out clear standards and expectations for compliance	We will ensure that anyone wishing to deliver goods and services to and on behalf of the Council are clear on their responsibilities in respect of Equality and Diversity	Appropriate training on integrating Equality and Diversity considerations into all commissioning and procurement processes will be commissioned through the Workforce Development team.	Training to be commissioned in April 2015 for a rollout throughout 2015/16 as part of a wider and integrated commissioning and procurement programme.	Officer time Corporate Training budget?		
	Provide appropriate training of managers who commission and procure services	We will provide learning opportunities so that commissioning managers are clear on their Equality and Diversity responsibilities	The requirements of providing goods and services to the Isle of Wight Council in respect of robust Equality and Diversity processes by suppliers is formally built into our procurement processes. The Strategic Lead for Organisational Development will assist the Commissioning and Procurement Service to clearly promote these requirements through our website and other procurement channels. Appropriate training on integrating Equality and Diversity considerations into all commissioning and procurement processes will be commissioned through the Workforce Development team.	Training to be commissioned in April 2015 for a rollout throughout 2015/16 as part of a wider and integrated commissioning and procurement programme.	Officer time Corporate training budget?	Strategic Equality and Diversity Board	