

Appendix 1

Equality Statement & Objectives 2016-20

Gravesham Borough Council is committed to fulfilling its duties within the Equalities Act and to further the aims of the Act we have identified a number of key objectives to ensure we continue to embed equality within the organisation.

We will review progress on these priorities annually and update them at least every four years.

Equality Statement

We want to make sure that every individual has the opportunity to reach their potential and that our services meet their needs.

As a Service Provider we will:

1. Help everyone to make use of the services to which they are entitled
2. Give information and advice in the most suitable ways
3. Monitor and evaluate services to identify whether they are meeting people's needs

As an Employer we will:

1. Select, appoint and promote individuals on the basis of merit
2. Encourage all staff to develop and reach their potential
3. Provide a safe and accessible workplace
4. Make sure staff treat each other with dignity and respect

To deliver our commitments we will:

1. Update this document annually to set out what we have done against our objectives
2. Fully review the objectives at least every four years
3. Continue to use Equality Impact Assessments when making changes to our services

Under the Equality Act (2010) we are required to prepare and publish one or more objectives to show how we will achieve the aims of the general equality duty. Our objectives for 2016-2020 are set out below.

Equality Objective 1 Celebrate the diversity of Gravesham so the borough is an increasingly cohesive place where people from all communities get on well together

	Action	Why are we doing it?	Target date	Lead Officer
1	To deliver community events To encourage and support the voluntary and community sector in	To increase the percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area	On-going	Anita Tysoe/ CSU

	delivering events to support a cultural calendar	To monitor any local tensions through the CSU		
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Equality Objective 2 Ensuring the council has a sound knowledge base of the community it serves including its own internal officers

	Action	Why are we doing it?	Target Date	Lead Officer / Department
2	Ensure the Community Data Profile for Gravesham is updated regularly to take account of the changing communities within the borough (at least every 3 years)	Use the Area Board to liaise with partners to understand the make-up of our community and any potential challenges	On-going	Ben Turner
3	Ensure employee data is maintained and includes information relating to all of the protected characteristics	To ensure the council is able to deliver its own internal services to all employees across the council	On-going	Human Resources
4	Engage with people with different protected characteristics at appropriate stages of policy design	To ensure we have an adequate evidence base for decision-making to enable us to base policies on evidence rather than assumptions	On-going	Anita Tysoe
5	Establish regular focus groups with people from the protected characteristics to focus on how they can access council services	To identify any barriers to service delivery which may result in the council indirectly discriminating against anyone	On-going	Anita Tysoe

Equality Objective 3 Access to All

	Action	Why are we doing it?	Target Date	Lead Officer
6	As a service provider we acknowledge the need to digitally progress and continue to advance equality of opportunity by ensuring all customers are able to access our services	To continue to improve outcomes for all by ensuring services are fully accessible. We will provide support to anyone who cannot independently access the council's digital services i.e. customers who are vulnerable, have a disability or poor literacy skills	On-going	Anita Tysoe
7	Adapt contact forms to ensure the council captures key information from users in order to determine our service users and their characteristics	To ensure the council provides services fairly across all community groups To identify any barriers to service delivery in order for them to be rectified	On-going	Anita Tysoe

8	Select, appoint and promote individuals on the basis of merit	To ensure equal opportunity for employment/progression within the council	On-going	Human Resources
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Equality Objective 4 To further embed equalities throughout all departments within the council

	Action	Why are we doing it?	Target date	Lead Officer
9	Maintain the presence of a lead officer on equalities across the authority	To drive forward a consistent approach to the council's responsibilities to equality duties	On-going	David Hughes
10	Ensure all committee and management team reports continue to provide an assessment of equalities	To ensure Members and Managers are fully informed of any impacts their decisions may have with regard to equalities	On-going	Sarah Kilkie