

**NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE SHADOW AUTHORITY
SHADOW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

THURSDAY 25TH MARCH 2021

Report Title	Equality Framework (Report from the Equalities Task and Finish Group)	
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Future Northants Programme	Corporate	
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List of Appendices

Appendix A – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Appendix B – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021-2025

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek approval for an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy; and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021-2025 that will form the Council's Equality Framework.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Member led Equalities Task and Finish Group has developed an equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and strategy that will guide the Council's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion between 2021 and 2025.
- 2.2 The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Scheme sets out the Council's commitment to ensure it advances the equality of opportunity, fostering good relations, and eliminates discrimination, in its role as an employer, service provider, commissioner of services, educator, partner and community leader.
- 2.3 The Equality Strategy sets out objectives which will focus of the Councils actions to meet its Equality Statement commitment during the period 2021-2025.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Shadow Executive Committee:
- a) Approves the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Appendix A) for North Northamptonshire Council subject to any amendments requested by the Shadow Executive.
 - b) Approves the Equality Strategy (Appendix B) for North Northamptonshire Council subject to any amendments requested by the Shadow Executive.
 - c) Delegates authority to the Policy Officer (Equality & Diversity) to make any amendments requested and any other minor amendments required in consultation with the Chair of the Equalities Task and Finish Group.
- 3.2 (Reasons for recommendations- To allow North Northamptonshire Council to fulfil its Public Sector Equality Duty as required by the Equalities Act (2010) (see Legal implications at section 6) and prepares the Council to undertake further work after 1 April 2021.)

4. Report Background

- 4.1 The Member led Equalities Task and Finish Group has developed an equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and strategy that will allow the Council to fulfil its general and specific duties as required by the Equalities Act (2010) and guide the Council's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion between 2021 and 2025.
- 4.2 The Member Task and Finish Group for Equalities was Chaired by Cllr Tom Partridge-Underwood and also comprised of Cllr Colin Wright, Cllr John-Paul Carr, Cllr Chris Smith-Haynes and Cllr Elayne Francis.

5. Issues and Choices

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

- 5.1 This Policy commences with the Equality Statement:
- North Northamptonshire is committed to treating people fairly. We want to instil a culture of inclusion in our workplace, where everyone feels valued and that they have the equality of opportunity to achieve their best. We believe that a diverse workforce can deliver a better service to our customers and local community.
- 5.2 The Policy outlines our legal responsibilities and our commitment to give due regard to the application of the nine characteristics protected under the Equality Act (2010):
- 5.2.1 Age

- 5.2.2 Disability
- 5.2.3 Gender reassignment
- 5.2.4 Marriage and civil partnership
- 5.2.5 Pregnancy and maternity
- 5.2.6 Race
- 5.2.7 Religion or belief
- 5.2.8 Gender
- 5.2.9 Sexual orientation.

- 5.3 The Policy sets out four equality objectives that are discussed in detail in the Strategy.
- 5.4 The Policy sets out the Council's commitment to evidence that equality impact has been part of a decision-making process.
- 5.5 The Policy concludes with reference to supporting policies.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

- 5.6 The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy commences with the Equality Statement:

North Northamptonshire is committed to treating people fairly. We want to instil a culture of inclusion in our workplace, where everyone feels valued and that they have the equality of opportunity to achieve their best. We believe that a diverse workforce can deliver a better service to our customers and local community.

- 5.7 It gives the legislative context to the General Equality Duties and nine protected characteristics that are covered by the Act.
- 5.8 The Strategy gives an statistical and factual overview of equality groups that are affected by the decisions the Council makes.
- 5.9 The Strategy outlines the workforce data that it will publish once available.
- 5.10 The Strategy, as required under the Equality Act (2010) outlines its equality objectives. The four objectives have been set to include the assessment criteria of the LGA Equality Framework.
 - 5.10.1 To lead by example within the community.
 - 5.10.2 Ensure that our services are accessible and inclusive.
 - 5.10.3 Create a fair and inclusive workplace culture.
 - 5.10.4 Reduce inequality in our Community
- 5.11 In achieving the equality objectives set, the Council will be able to self-assess their equality progress on the LGA Equality Framework and set actions to progress and achieve the next level.
- 5.12 Corporate and Service Level Action Plans will be developed to achieve the Equality Objectives. It is proposed these action plans will be monitored and reviewed by an Equality Steering Group.

- 5.13 Clear responsibilities and accountabilities are set out to ensure a holistic approach to equalities is executed at every level in the Council.
- 5.14 The Strategy also sets a standard of how equalities is reviewed and monitored to keep it relevant, legal and achieving the Equality Objectives.

6. Implications (including financial implications)

6.1 Resources and Financial

- 6.1.1 There are no direct resource or financial implications arising from this report.

6.2 Legal

- 6.2.1 The Equality Act (2010) sets out the public sector equality duty, which is made up of a general duty and specific duties.

- 6.2.2 The general duty requires that the Council, in the exercise of its functions, has due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and 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.

- 6.2.3 The Public Sector Equality Duties require the Council to:

6.2.3.1 Publish information to demonstrate how it complies with the general equality duty of the Equality Act (2010).

6.2.3.2 Publish one or more equality objective.

6.2.3.3 Publish information relating to people who share a protected characteristic and are affected by the Council's policies and practices.

6.3 Risk

- 6.3.1 There are no significant risks arising from the proposed recommendations in this report.

6.4 Consultation

- 6.4.1 Consultation has not been carried out on the Baseline Framework but will form an integral part of the development of the Framework.

6.5 Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny

6.5.1 None.

6.6 Environmental Impact

6.6.1 None.

6.7 Community Impact

6.7.1 The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework will help in supporting North Northamptonshire's communities.

7. Background Papers

7.1 Equalities Task and Finish Group Terms of Reference – Shadow Executive Committee 11 June 2020 Item 6 Appendix 8.