

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) Action Plan – 2022

The main areas of the government's Indicators of Integration have been incorporated into this plan to build on the community integration and cohesion work that is carried out by the council on an on-going basis. These include:

- Housing / social inclusion – homelessness / rough sleeping
- Education – work with local schools, young people
- Community work / facilities
- Health and social care
- Leisure
- Work
- Digital / technology
- Transport

| Equality Priority 1 – Seek to make the borough a welcoming place for everyone |  |  |                            |                   |  |
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| Outcome   | Action   | How measured   | By whom                    | When              | Details / Status   |
| <b>1a. Strong community relations are built in the borough</b>                | Local forums and groups supported to run activities to build good relations between different groups, be sustainable and representative of local communities.                  | Success / satisfaction and contacts built through activities held.     | Connected Communities team | On-going          | A range of forums supported, mainly virtually, including, Multicultural, Older People, Basingstoke Interfaith Forum, Disability, Access 4 All working Group, Over 55s. Work to support forums to be sustainable and more representative of local communities is ongoing.   |
|   | Equalities monitoring in place to assist the council to understand the diverse needs of those who are in housing need.   | Characteristics of those in housing need identified and monitored.     | Housing team               | On-going / annual | Housing forms record and monitor equalities data to identify and address particular issues for any groups. None identified to date. The impact of the Housing Allocations Policy is regularly monitored – no equalities issues identified to date. Equalities monitoring data is also obtained via the Social Inclusion Partnership – no equalities issues identified to date. |
|   | Work with the Social Inclusion Partnership to eliminate rough sleeping and homelessness in the borough.  | Numbers of individuals who are rough sleeping.                         | Social Inclusion team      | On-going          | The Social Inclusion Partnership continues to meet virtually to share learning and build networks across the borough. The numbers of individuals who are sleeping rough has decreased significantly due to this effective partnership work.  |
| <b>1b. The borough is a safe place where people want to live</b>              | Housing team working in partnership with Health and Social Care agencies to improve the support provided to individuals with mental health conditions and with a housing need. | Involvement in partnership work and improved support for service users | Housing team               | On-going          | Support networks put in place to encourage self-sufficiency and socio-economic stability in the community, includes assisting people with changes in income, for example, Universal Credit and accessing other organisations. Continued commitment to the MEAM (Making   |

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|  |   |  |  |                              | Every Adult Matter) approach way of working – ensuring a joined-up response to those clients experiencing multiple disadvantages.  |
|  | Partnership work with other agencies, such as the Police, Hampshire County Council, to tackle hate crime. | Involvement in community, forums and partnerships. Production of hate crime leaflet to provide clear signposting on where to raise issues. | Community Support team and Safer North Hampshire | On-going<br>Leaflet produced | Regular liaison with the Police to facilitate communications with local communities, particularly in relation to the race equality work. Work with CAB to deliver the hate crime group and look for best practice at tackling related issues. Statistics analysed quarterly to target Community teams' work. Hate crime offences against disabled people are less likely to be reported, work is underway to address this.   |
|  | Support for national initiatives targeted at diverse communities  | Number of and range of communities supported   | Connected Communities team                       | As required                  | Community Development Officer for Inclusion and Diversity works in partnership with other organisations to support diverse communities to engage and participate in initiatives such as: refugees/evacuees to settle into the local community, where necessary, including recent work with individuals from Afghanistan. Brexit/ EU settlement scheme, Census 2021, Covid 19 Vaccination programme; and support for the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme, and Afghanistan evacuees. |
|  | Work with partners to address domestic abuse  | Partnership networks are maintained and adapt to local need  | Community Support team                           | On-going                     | The Community Safety team continues to work closely with the local Domestic Abuse Forum and coordinates its meetings to ensure that the council supports vulnerable individuals, who are affected by domestic abuse in the most effective way.   |

**Equality Priority 2 – Seek to make sure relevant services are accessible to all**

| Outcome   | Action  | How measured   | By whom  | When    | Status  |
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| <b>2a. People are able to access council services in ways that meet their needs</b><br>(this includes services that are | Continuous improvement of the customer experience in accessing council services | Customer Relationship Management (CRM) data and council website. | Customer Service, Improvement and Performance teams / All Business Units | Ongoing | Corporate Contact Centre (CCC) team provide Web Team with top ten reasons for calls each month to update and improve web customer journeys as appropriate. Service based Social Media enquiries are now handled by the CCC team, this reduces the time it takes to resolve queries for customers and offers an accessible channel for customer service, in addition to the Web Chat function. Web Chat has been introduced for the Benefits service and is delivered by the CCC. Council telephone Interactive Voice Response |

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| commissioned by the council) |  |   |   |          | is set up to ensure that if a caller takes no action will route their call to the Corporate Contact Centre. <a href="#">Relay UK</a> is available and if customers are unable to access services by other channels an appointment is made for them at reception (outside of lockdown)  |
|                              | Council Website meets current accessibility standards  | Web Content Management System   | Customer Service, Improvement and Performance teams | Ongoing  | The council website has been part of a sample external audit carried by the Central Digital & Data Office who checked the site against the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) version 2.1 AA standard. The audit found the site to be partially compliant. Prior to the audit this was the council assessment of the status following the Shaw Trust review in 2020 and ongoing internal audits of the site. The issues raised in the audit around the accessibility statement and header/footer design are being addressed. With regards the broader accessibility picture; a new council website is currently under construction and PDF (inaccessible) content is being removed or redesigned to make the documents accessible. <a href="#">AccessAble</a> website has been maintained – this provides accessibility information about a range of venues in the borough. |
|                              | Community transport schemes serve individuals who are unable to access public transport                          | Schemes are accessible and meet the needs of a range of groups  | Transport officer                                   | On-going | Transport schemes that are supported by the council serve a range of passengers, however, the county council contracted Dial a Ride service is also for anyone whose transport needs are not met by public bus services e.g. have certain access issues or no bus service nearby.  |
|                              | Digital Strategy development includes actions to facilitate digital inclusion and consideration of diverse needs | Equality impact assessments, and where relevant engagement, is carried out on all new digital initiatives | Digital team  | On-going | Taking practical action to embed digital inclusion and accessibility into the council's digital work to make sure that service users are not excluded from services e.g. voice recognition software, screen readers and similar solutions are made available to both customers with particular access needs where possible.  |
|                              | Council-owned community facilities/assets are as accessible as possible to people with a range of access needs   | Adaptations are made to improve accessibility of council-owned community buildings.                       | Property and Community teams                        | On-going | The council has provided grants to local community organisations (through Section 106 and Local Infrastructure Fund) over the last 6 years to improve their facilities and buildings and make them more accessible. The council's assets are continually reviewed as part of its capital building programme to improve accessibility where it is possible to do so.  |

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|  |   | Training is provided for organisations running council-owned community facilities to identify accessibility opportunities. | Connected Communities team – via AccessAble | During 2022 | Training dates being arranged.  |
|  | Projects to deliver health and wellbeing programmes in the borough for groups that are most in need.  | Attendance and customer feedback   | Health and Wellbeing team                   | On-going    | Continued work with commissioned projects e.g. the Healthy Community project in Buckskin (this is due to start in Popley and South Ham shortly). Continuing with the extremely successful Relax Kids programme and looking at developing a health and wellbeing brochure to go out to residents providing information about local post-Covid support.   |
|  | Leisure – council and partners have invested in new facilities that meet local community needs  | Attendance at these facilities and customer feedback   | Health and Wellbeing team                   | On-going    | Major sports facilities provided, such as, all-weather pitches at Testbourne and The Vyne Schools, Down Grange and Winklebury Stadium. These have development plans targeting young people. Investment in local sports infrastructure to improve accessibility, such as at Fieldgate Community Centre. Currently completing a facilities audit to establish what should be the priorities for the next 5/6 years. This will be reflected in a refresh of the Built Sports Facility and Playing Pitch Strategies, later in the year. |
|  | Concessionary pricing scheme in place for residents, who are eligible to use the facilities at Aquadrome, Tadley Health and Fitness Centre and Basingstoke Golf Centre                | Corporate Key Performance Indicators for attendance and customer satisfaction  | Health and Wellbeing team                   | On-going    | Basingstoke Sport and Leisure Trust provide a concessionary pricing scheme for use for the swimming pools and gym facilities for people on a low income e.g. in receipt of Universal Credit or those who are over 60. Agreed extension of leisure management contract until the end of December 2025- concessionary prices are specifically identified as an important element of that.   |
|  | Provide information through a range of communication channels and materials in a range of formats (e.g. large print, other languages etc.) and use a range of communication channels. | Evidence of materials being provided in alternative formats as necessary / Use of diverse communication channels           | Comms and Customer Services teams           | On-going    | The council has a duty to provide information in a range of formats via social media, leaflets, emails and virtual meetings. All communications offer at least two ways of contacting the council, to ensure that customers are provided with the information they need in the most accessible way. Communications are circulated through a range of channels e.g. representative forums.   |

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|  | Service areas continue to collect and analyse customer equalities information, where relevant.   | Level and type of equalities data collected by service areas  | All Business Units                     | On-going | Services continue to be supported to consider equalities data in consultation and service use to analyse trends/address issues where necessary.  |
| <b>2b. The council can demonstrate that its services and policies meet the Public Sector Equality Duty</b> | Continued use of Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process throughout the council, where relevant, supported by Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) Working Group members. | EIAs and associated actions completed<br><br>Reports include EIA findings to inform decision-making | ED&I Working Group /All Business Units | On-going | EIAs continue are carried out, where necessary, by the ED&I Working Group. Findings are included in councillor reports to inform decision-making. EIAs completed by range of service areas e.g. Housing, Benefits, Planning, and Community. Where any issues were identified, mitigating actions are considered. |
|  | Data on service use is gathered and analysed, where possible, to ensure that any gaps in provision are addressed.  | Service teams' data   | ED&I Working Group/All Business Units  | On-going | Data demonstrating who is using council services is published and analysed to address any gaps in provision on an annual basis.  |

### Equality Priority 3 – Seek to provide fair treatment that meets individual needs

| Outcome  | Action   | How measured   | By whom            | When                   | Status  |
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| 3a. The council has a good understanding of people's needs and delivers services / works with partners to meet those needs | Equalities monitoring carried out, where relevant, across council through consultation, surveys etc. | Use of standard equalities questions in consultations and customer surveys | All Business Units | On-going               | Continued monitoring of equalities data from consultation and engagement activities. Current data show that there is a lack of representation of young and people aged over 65, disabled people and individuals from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority groups. To better understand the reason for this discussion has been held with local groups. Feedback provided forms part of a review of the council's approach to consultations.   |
|  | Impact of grants to voluntary and community sector monitored   | Through regular monitoring of grants awarded                               | Grant Officers     | Quarterly /bi-annually | Quarterly monitoring of strategic grants and six-monthly monitoring of programme grants against agreed KPIs. These are allocated to a range of Voluntary and Community Organisations (VCOs). Regular oversight of existing Local Infrastructure Fund projects and annual follow-up of outcomes achieved. These are allocated to local VCOs to improve access to, and participation in, local community activities. Councillor Community Grants introduced in September 2021 for |

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|  |  |   |                                  |                    | physical items for community groups. Monitoring covers who has benefitted.   |
|  | Coordination of the Employment and Skills Zone work to promote inclusive approach to employment in the borough   | Increase in training opportunities and employment taken up by underrepresented groups                                     | Economy and Culture team         | On-going           | Facilitate joint activities, projects and campaigns to reach diverse groups and promote access to employment programmes such as Kickstart, Sector Based Work Academies, and online training. Share information on vacancies, courses and events via partners working with diverse groups of local residents.             |
|  | Support for armed forces personnel and their families  | Local armed forces personnel and their families have appropriate support in place in relation to housing, employment etc. | All Business Units               | Quarterly review   | Action Plan in place which underpins the Covenant signed by the council in 2014. Currently lead authority for the Armed Forces Covenant Partnership with Rushmoor and Hart Borough Councils. Also raising awareness through delivery of Mayoral and Remembrance events programmes.                                       |
| <b>3b. People can participate in the council's decision-making processes and are consulted on policies and services that affect them</b> | Consultation and EIA guidance provided to teams includes advice on how to engage with diverse groups to better understand people's needs and share learning. | Accessible formats and variety of consultation methods used<br><br>Range of people involved in consultations              | Policy team / All Business Units | On-going           | The council has adapted its approach to consultation and engagement with diverse communities due to COVID-19. Service teams use virtual tools such as Zoom but still make sure that those who do not have internet access can participate via telephone / post etc. Consultation Log and EIA guidance support this work. |
| <b>Equality Priority 4 – Commit to having and increasingly diverse workforce</b>   |  |   |                                  |                    |  |
| <b>Outcome</b>   | <b>Action</b>  | <b>How measured</b>   | <b>By whom</b>                   | <b>When</b>        | <b>Status</b>  |
| <b>4a. The council workforce better reflects the local working</b>   | Development of recruitment and other HR practices to ensure that equality principles are embedded and that processes are inclusive and accessible.           | Workforce equalities data - % of protected characteristics groups reaching interview stage / employed.                    | Human Resources (HR) team        | Review bi-annually | Work to analyse the workforce and borough working age profile and consider how gaps in representation can be addressed has been reinitiated. Particularly via the Race at Work Charter that the council committed to signing up to in December 2020. Analysis of ethnicity pay gap data is underway.                     |

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| <b>population and different skills and talents are valued</b>                              | Equalities profiles of employees, job applicants and apprentices are monitored and any adverse trends addressed.                         | Workforce equalities data - % of protected characteristics groups reaching interview stage / employed.         | HR team            | Review bi-annually | Data reported bi-annually to HR Committee and information published as part of the Public Sector Equality Duty (relevant actions as above). 'Disability Confident Employer' certificate currently runs until June 2022, we will then reapply for renewed status. Apprenticeships and work experience placements offered to encourage younger people to join the workforce.  |
|  | Enable flexible working options to support enhance work life balance for all staff   | Wide range of flexible working options available   | HR / Digital teams | On-going           | The Smarter Ways of Working project aims to make working practices and office space at the council more flexible, accessible and efficient e.g. via voice recognition software, office furniture and supports and enables a healthy work – life balance, which underpins focus on inclusion within our workplace. Teams are assessing the impact of new proposals on mental health and the need to maintain reasonable adjustments. |
| <b>4b. Employees, managers and councillors comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty</b> | Ensure appropriate ED&I training continues to be provided and employees and councillors carry out training on ED&I related issues.       | Number of training opportunities provided<br>% employees and Councillors that carried out e-learning training. | HR team            | Review annually    | eLearning is undertaken by staff and is available to councillors. Councillor development sessions took place in 2021 to include more training on ED&I.  |
|  | Gender and ethnicity pay gap audit for council workforce.  | Number of women, men and ethnicities in different pay bands and relative pay received for the same jobs.       | HR team            | Review annually    | The council's pay gap is still relatively very low when compared nationally and to other local authorities. Ethnicity pay gap guidance is pending from government but consideration is already being given to relevant statistics and improving on recruitment / working practices.   |
|  | Awareness raising and practical support for staff and managers about mental health conditions (disability, signs, symptoms and support). | Information, guidance and training provided.   | HR team            | Review annually    | We have a range of supportive measures in place to help support colleagues including counselling, Employee Assistance (EAP) mental health champions and an occupational health service. Wellbeing training sessions and events are continuing to take place virtually. A Health and Wellbeing resource page is available for all staff to access on the staff intranet and regular communications on the support                    |

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