

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

1 Purpose

- 1.1 This report provides an assessment of the council's performance against the Public Sector Equality Duty and to meet the requirements of Regulation 2 of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011.

2 Recommendations/for decision

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the contents of AVDC's Equality performance assessment for 2014-15 and highlight any issues that it wishes Cabinet to consider prior to approving its publication (to meet the Council's statutory duty).
- 2.2 The Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the Equality Objectives for 2016-2020 and highlight any issues that it wishes Cabinet to consider prior to approving its publication (to meet the Council's statutory duty).

3 Supporting information

- 3.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), came into force on 5 April 2011. The objective behind the duty is to ensure that consideration of equality issues forms part of the routine, day-to-day decision making and operational delivery of public authorities. In summary, requires that the District Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Equality Act
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not by:
 - Removing or minimising disadvantage that people in the protected groups suffer because its connected to that protected characteristic
 - Take steps to meet the needs of people from the protected groups where these differ to those of other people
 - Encourage participation from protected groups in public life or other activity where their participation is disproportionately low
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not by:
 - Tackling prejudice
 - Promoting understanding
- 3.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity status, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.
- 3.3 The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 came into force on 10 September 2011. In summary they require the District Council to
- By not later than 6 April 2012, prepare and publish one or more equality objectives that are specific and measurable to be achieved within a four year

time frame. (This is an ongoing requirement to be met within 4 years from the last date of publication.)

- By not later than 31 January 2012, and annually thereafter, publish information to demonstrate its compliance with the general Equality Duty and this information must include:
 - information relating to persons who share relevant protected characteristic who are its employees and other persons affected by our policies and practices (such as service users)
 - Publish information in such a manner that it is accessible to the public, including within another published document.
- 3.4 The Government Equalities Office has stated that these regulations are designed to ensure that public bodies are transparent about their compliance with the Equality Duty. And, that by publishing information about their equality performance and objectives, public bodies will be accountable to the people and communities they serve.
- 3.5 Attached at Appendix 1 is the equality Monitoring Report for the council. The report includes information about the population of the district, information about our staff and what we have been doing to meet the equalities duty.
- 3.6 This report will be considered by Cabinet in January 2016. The Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the contents of AVDC's Equality Monitoring Report for 2014-15 and highlight any issues that it wishes Cabinet to consider prior to approving its publication (to meet the Council's statutory duty).
- 3.7 We are also refreshing our Equality Objectives and these can be found in Appendix 2. These have been produced in consultation with the Equalities Steering Group.

4 Options considered

- 4.1 None this is a statutory requirement.

5 Resource implications

- 5.1 None

Contact Officer
Background Documents

Tamsin Ireland 01296 585004
None

Aylesbury Vale District Council



Equality Report

2014 - 15

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Introduction

This document provides information about the work that Aylesbury Vale District Council has done over the last year to meet our equality duty. The Council aims to place equality and diversity at the heart of everything it does.

The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council to pay due regard to the way it can:

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation
2. Promote equality of opportunity for everyone
3. Encourage good relations between people of different backgrounds

These are called the three aims of the public sector duty.

These aims are supported by specific duties intended to improve performance on the general duty. These specific duties require us to publish our equality objectives at least every four years and equality data annually to show:

1. How the authority has paid due regard to the 3 aims of the public sector duty.
2. That the authority consciously thought about the 3 aims of the public sector duty in its decision making.
3. Data relating to our employees, as we have over 150 employees within our organisation.
4. Information relating to people affected by our policies and service.

We have developed new equality objectives for 2016 - 2020 and these can be found in appendix 1.

Section 1: Our Residents

Aylesbury Vale is situated 40 miles west of London and 65 miles south east of Birmingham. It is 350 square miles of leafy Buckinghamshire countryside. It is within an hour's drive of Heathrow, Gatwick, Luton and Stansted airports. It is also home to the world-famous National Spinal Injuries Centre at Stoke Mandeville hospital and is the birthplace of the Paralympic movement.

Population

There are around 185,000 people living in Aylesbury Vale; making it the third largest district in the country.

- We have slightly more women (51%) than men (49%) living in the district.
- 16% of our population are over 65 years of age, slightly less than the UK figure (18%).
- 19% of our population are under 15 years of age, slightly higher than the UK as a whole (18%)

The following information is taken from the 2011 Census.

Health

In 2011, almost nine out of every ten (86%) residents of Aylesbury Vale described themselves as being in good or very good health (81% in England and Wales). In 2011, 11% of residents described themselves as being of fair health with 3% and 1% describing themselves as being of bad and very bad health respectively.

Nearly one in seven residents (14%) described themselves as having a long-term health problem or disability that limits their day-to-day activities, which had lasted, or was expected to last, at least 12 months - a 12% increase since 2001.¹

Religion

Those affiliated with the Christian religion remained the largest group; 62% of Aylesbury Vale (59% of England and Wales). However, the number of residents who stated that their religion was Christian in 2011 was fewer than in 2001. This followed the national trend; the size of this group decreased by 12% to 62% of the Aylesbury Vale population in 2011, down from 74% in 2001. Nationally for England and Wales, the size of the Christian group decreased 13% points to 59% in 2011, down from 72% in 2001.

The size of the group who stated that they had no religious affiliation has increased by 71% since 2001, from 16% in 2001 to 26% in 2011. There was a 25% increase in this group for England and Wales.

Other religions accounted for 6% of the Aylesbury Vale population in 2011. The largest group being those who stated they were of the Muslim religion (4%). Those who did not state a religion accounted for 7%.

Ethnic Group

Most residents of Aylesbury Vale belonged to the White ethnic group 90% in 2011, decreasing from 94% of the population in 2001. Nationally in England and Wales, most residents belonged to

¹ In 2011 this question was structured differently to 2001 and therefore can only be considered as broadly comparable between Census years

the White ethnic group (86%) in 2011.

The Non-White Ethnic Group population increased by 83% in Aylesbury Vale and accounts for 10% of the population. In the non-white resident population; 2.2% were of Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups, 5.8% were from the Asian or Asian British (including Chinese) group, 1.9% were from the Black or Black British group and a further 0.4% were from Other ethnic groups (including Arabs in 2011, but not including Chinese in 2001 or 2011).

Within Aylesbury Vale 10% of households (12% in England and Wales) had partners or household members of different ethnic groups in 2011, a 51% increase since 2001.

Usual residents born outside of the UK

On the 27th March 2011, 11% of Aylesbury Vale residents stated they were born outside of the UK, with just under half (44%) arriving in the last 10 years (4.7% of Aylesbury Vale's population). This is similar to England and Wales where just over 13% of residents were born outside of the UK and just over half arrived in the last 10 years.

The nine most reported countries of birth of foreign born usual residents for Aylesbury Vale account for just over half of all residents born outside of the UK (51%). The most reported countries of birth for Aylesbury Vale are; Pakistan (1.3%), India (0.7%), Poland (0.7%), Ireland (0.7%), South Africa (0.5%), Germany (0.5%), The Caribbean (0.4%), United States (0.3%), South-East Asia excluding the Philippines (0.4%), and all other countries of birth (excluding the UK) 5.3%.

Household language

The 2011 Census collected information for the first time on main language and English language skills. In 2011, all usual residents in 94% of households spoke English as a main or preferred language. This is slightly higher than the average for England and Wales at 91%.

In 3.4% of households, at least one adult (16+) spoke English as their main or preferred language and in 0.5% of households no adults but at least one child spoke English as a main or preferred language. In the remaining 2.2% of households there were no residents who had English as a main or preferred language. It should be noted these statistics cannot be taken as a measure of English speaking proficiency, rather as a resident's preferred or main language.

Sexual Orientation

Questions on sexual orientation were not included in the 2011 census so figures for Aylesbury Vale are not available. The Office for National Statistics has produced figures for sexual orientation from its integrated household survey for the UK as a whole.

- In 2014, 1.6% of adults in the UK identified their sexual identity as lesbian, gay or bisexual.
- The likelihood of an adult identifying as lesbian, gay or bisexual decreased with age. Around 2.6% of adults aged 16 to 24 years identified themselves as lesbian, gay or bisexual. This decreased to 0.6% of adults aged 65 and over.
- Around 0.5% of adults identified themselves as bisexual, with women (0.7%) being twice as likely as men to do so (0.3%).
- London had the highest percentage of adults identifying themselves as lesbian, gay or bisexual at 2.6%

Section 2: Our Staff

Establishment

As of 31 March 2015, AVDC employed 484 people (507 last year), a reduction of 23 people over the year and 103 people less than four years ago. Additionally, over the last year Full Time Equivalent (FTE) posts decreased from 478 to 460.

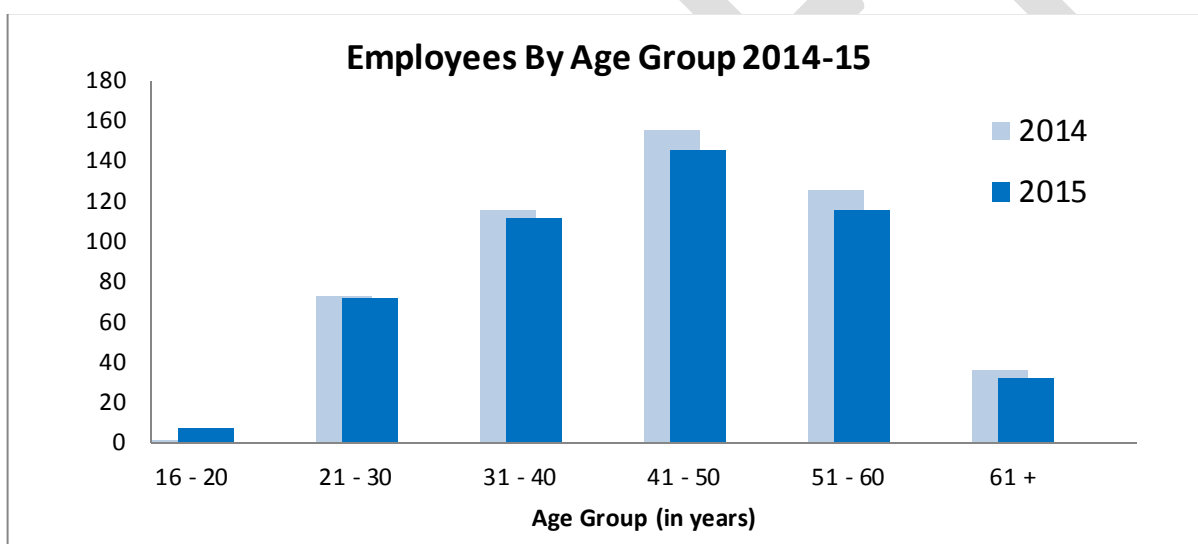
Casual workers, agency staff, apprentices and volunteers are not included in this report.

Flexible Working

The number of people working full-time reduced from 406 to 383, whilst the number of part-time employees remained approximately the same from 100 to 101. Part-time working accounts for more than a quarter (26.4%) of the workforce.

Age Profile

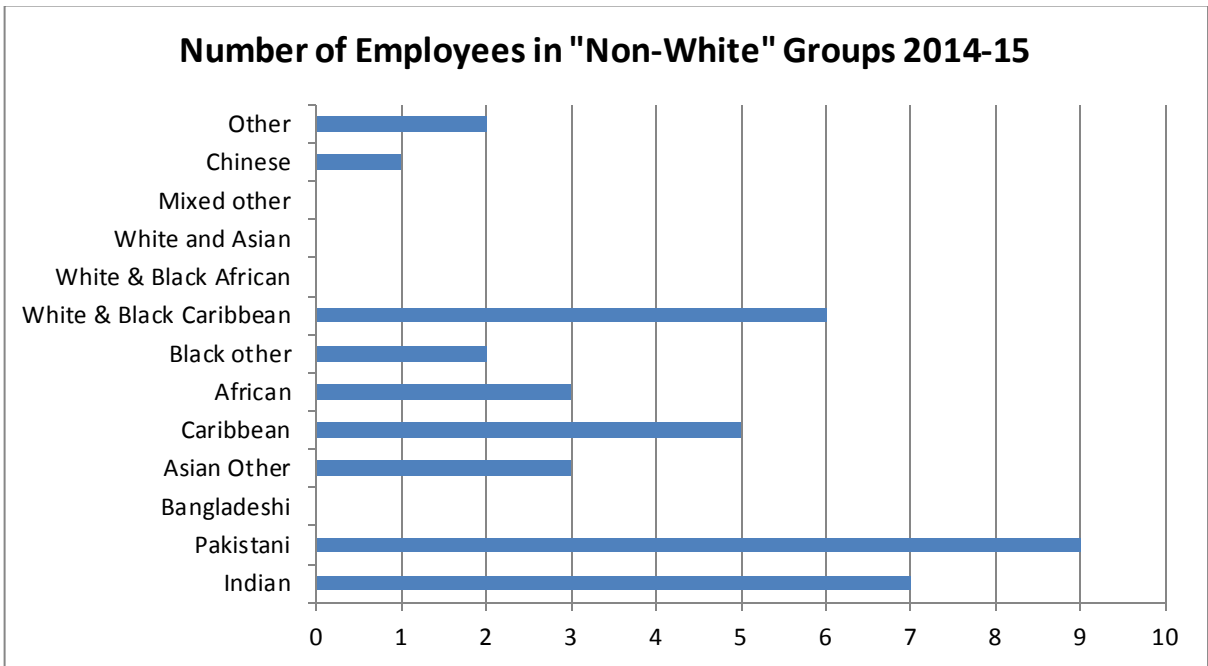
At the end of March 2015 the age profile of employees followed a natural distribution, with fewer people employed at the upper age range than last year.



The age profile is similar to last year, with the reduction in over-all figures reflecting a number of voluntary redundancies in the older age groups.

Ethnicity

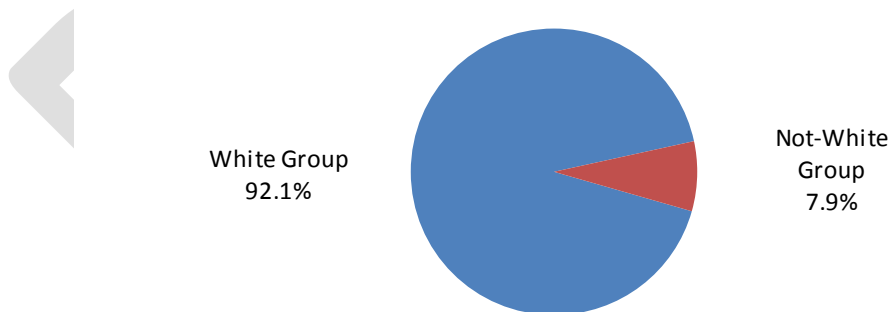
In March 2015, of 484 employees, 436 (92.1%) declared themselves to be “white”, white other, white Irish or were un-stated. The remaining 7.9% have defined themselves to be from one or other of various recognized minority ethnic groups. This has changes slightly over the last year; in March 2014 469 employees (92.5%) declared themselves to be “white”, white other and / or white Irish and 7.5% declared themselves to be from one or other of various recognised minority ethnic groups.



The 2011 Census indicates that White British make up 85% of the local Aylesbury Vale population, with the national (English) average at 80%. The broader “white group” (White, White Other and White Irish) nationally makes up 90% of the community; slightly lower than that group of AVDC employees (92.1%).

The following chart, graphically, indicates the percentage (7.9%) of “not-white” minority groups employed by AVDC in 2015.

Minority Groups (AVDC) 2015



Disability

At 31 March 2015, there were 15 employees (18 in 2014) who considered themselves to have a disability under the provisions of The Equalities Act 2010, which represents 3.1% of the workforce (3.6% last year).

Previously, between 2008 and 2013 the number of employees with a self-declared disability had remained fairly constant at between 4% and 5%. Over the past two years, the numbers (as a percentage) have declined; the following table provides a more specific indication:

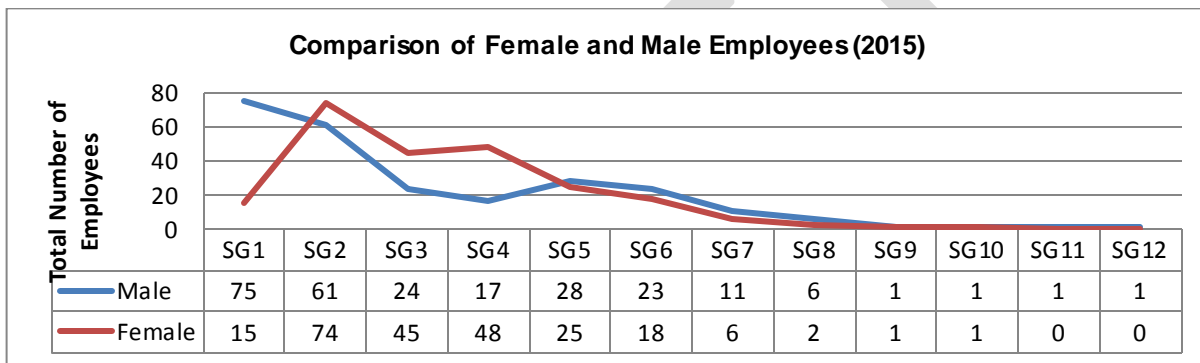
As at 31 st March	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Percentage	5.0%	4.6%	4.3%	4.3%	4.5%	4.2%	3.6%	3.1%

Gender

At 31 March 2015, the Council employed 484 people, of which 235 (48.5%) were female and 249 (51.5%) were male.

Essentially, AVDC has a 50/50 gender profile, which can fluctuate, but as can be seen from the following chart for 2015, generally there were more females in the lower grades and less in the very senior roles.

The very high proportion of males at the lowest grade are employed within Recycling and Waste and reflects an inability to attract sufficient females in the roles of Loader and Driver.



Training

AVDC continues to train staff on Equalities issues. All new starters complete an eLearning module and attend a half day face to face training course where the legislation is put into the work context. We also deliver additional support training for staff when needed. The table below illustrates the courses that have been delivered since April 2013 and the numbers of staff who have attended this training.

1st April 2013 to 9 November 2015	
Learning Activity	Attendees
Deaf Awareness Training	16
Dementia Information and Awareness	11
Difference Matters	16
Disability Awareness for Front Line Staff	8
Equalities at AVDC	34
Equality & Respect Training for Recycling	78
Equality and Diversity (eLearning)	34

In the last 18 months we have developed a series of bitesize sessions for Recycling and Waste staff based at our depot which include some session on Equalities. This has been integrated into the induction programme for staff and is also being rolled out to existing depot staff members as shown in the table above.

Section 3: Our Equalities Progress

Over the last year we have been working to address the aims of the public sector equality duty and some of the actions we have taken are detailed below.

Facilities Management

We invited Action for Hearing Loss to give advice on how we can improve our services for people with hearing loss and we are hoping to get their Charter Mark in the near future. Deaf awareness training has been delivered to front line staff and we have arranged regular servicing of the loop system. We have introduced a new procedure for people with hearing loss in case of fire on both receptions and in our conference facilities.

We have also addressed the needs of our staff by making changes to ensure that wheelchair users are able to work in a safe manner and supplying different types of working environments for staff e.g. different height desks and chairs.

A push button door has been installed in the customer service centre and staff have been trained in the use of the evacuation lift in the event of a fire.

Housing

Over the last year our housing team has continued to gather equalities monitoring information from its customers. This information is used to produce the annual Housing Equalities Monitoring Report.

We have produced an Internet Access and Literacy Report which looked at the implications of the introduction of Universal Credit for local residents who have limited internet access and/or literacy issues. The report identified older people as more likely to have limited internet access and made recommendations for staff to alleviate the problem.

A Health and Housing report has been produced which profiles the wards within Aylesbury Vale. It was found that Aylesbury Central ward had the highest proportion of overcrowded households in the district, against a proportionately lower rate of households in very bad health. This ward has a predominantly younger age profile, in fact the highest proportion of people aged between 20 and 39 across all wards in the district. A younger population may contribute to proportionately fewer households suffering from very bad health.

Communities Team

- We provide Ladies' only swimming sessions; this is an ongoing initiative.
- We have supported Buckinghamshire Disability Services (BuDS') to raise awareness about abuse of disabled parking (campaign to target AVDC car parks) – currently running
- Britain Accessible Challenge 2014: inclusive play areas, Fair4All taxi scheme, Paralympics legacy, staying put scheme, safe places scheme
- Health and Wellbeing event at Fairford Leys – promotion of disabled access (BuDS) Shopmobility promoted their scooters. Food diabetic, gluten free etc. – Oct 2015

- Grant funding to a range of organisations supporting young people, older people, advice services, etc.
- Sportivate activities for disabled people included two rounders' projects
- Six week cricket project for disabled people with Harding House School

Environmental Health and Licensing

Fair4All

Fair4All is a collaborative scheme designed by Bucks Disability Services and AVDC to promote fairer treatment of disabled passengers in local taxis and private hire vehicles.

Launched by MP Mark Harper in 2014 as part of the "Challenge Britain" initiative, the Fair4all scheme promoted those taxi companies that invested time and money into developing a better transportation system for those with disability. In Aylesbury Vale there were a total of 3 companies which provided drivers for training and were able to provide a range of vehicles to accommodate varying needs.

Additional training was organised and run for many drivers and terms of service were written to ensure equitable treatment of all customers.

The full launch is still in the pipeline as there are online developments still happening; however the scheme is live with companies now providing a more robust service for all of our residents.

Staying Put Service

The aim of the Staying Put Service is to help people remain in their own homes. We do this mainly through Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs), which involves adapting the homes of people with disabilities in order that they can continue to live at home. We deal with people of all ages and all disabilities, not just physical problems. We also offer Flexible Home Improvement Loans specifically to the over 60s. These are loans to cover all aspects of home improvement which are low-interest and need not be repaid until the property is sold.

We make home visits in every case and offer help with completing paperwork, drawing up plans, project managing work and advising on alternative sources of funding when applicants do not qualify for a 100% grant, all in order that every person assessed as needing a home adaptation has equal access to its provision. Recognizing that some of our clients have specific needs, we have undergone specialist training in understanding and communicating with clients with dementia, as well as safeguarding awareness. We work jointly with the County Council's Occupational Therapy and Social Care teams when our clients have more complex needs and with local voluntary organisations when necessary (for example, when interpretation services are required).

Taxi Tokens Scheme

The Taxi Tokens Scheme continues to be a valued service by residents of the Vale. Tokens are issued to people of pensionable age or to those with disabilities as defined by the Equality Act 2010. Tokens are issued to help recipients make essential journeys where they are unable to access local bus services.

HMO Licensing

A large number of vulnerable people are housed in the private rented sector, and many of these people rent rooms in large shared houses (these are known as Houses in Multiple Occupation – HMO's). Local Authorities are required to license large HMO's (those over 3 storeys, housing 5 or more occupants who form more than 1 household). At Aylesbury Vale District Council we have adopted the 'Additional HMO' licensing powers which mean that almost all properties housing at least 3 tenants forming more than 1 household must now be licensed.

Licensing of these properties enables us to inspect these properties to ensure that those responsible for managing these HMO's are 'fit and proper' persons and that the houses are safe places to live with all appropriate fire safety measures, kitchen facilities and bathrooms in place. By doing this, those residents living in what is often the cheapest end of the market are protected from rogue landlords and poor housing standards.

Accessibility to Services

We have completed a detailed Equality Impact Assessment looking at the impact of our new website and the move to providing more services online. Actions to address these issues have been identified and are being monitored regularly by the project team.

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Equality Objectives 2016 - 2020

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Equality Objectives

Introduction and Background

Aylesbury Vale District Council is committed to promoting equality, recognising and valuing diversity and respecting the principles of human rights. We believe that our residents have the right to be safe and protected from harm, to be treated fairly and with dignity, to live the life of choice and to take an active part in their community.

These Equality Objectives present our vision and approach to working towards equal life chances for all and are consistent with the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Framework for Local Government (2012).

Purpose of Equality Objectives

The Equality Objectives will help us to focus on our most important equality issues. We will then be able to deliver real improvements in our policy making, our service delivery, our employment and our resource allocation.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 is made up of a **General Equality Duty**, which is set out in the Act itself, and **Specific Duties**, which are imposed by regulations.

We must make sure that all of our policies, strategies, services, functions and activities have given proper consideration to equalities.

The **General Equality Duty** (GED) sets out three aims. We must have due regard to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity (this means for example, removing or minimizing disadvantage, taking account of disability, meeting different people's needs, encouraging people to participate in public life);
- Foster good relations (this means tackling prejudice and promoting understanding).

The **Specific Duties** require us to:

- Prepare and publish our Equality Objectives (by 6 April 2012);
- Ensure that our Objectives are specific and measurable;
- Make sure that our Objectives are in an accessible format.

Equality Objective 1 – Ensure equality is always considered as part of our decision making process.

- Assess the impact on equalities when we make decisions that are likely to affect people
- Publish Equality Analysis documents on our website
- Report progress on our Equality Objectives

Equality Objective 2 - Promote diversity and general understanding of the Equalities Act 2010

- Carry out analysis of published data (2011 Census, IMD 2015)
- Communicate our responsibilities under the equality act to Staff and Members.
- Communicate regularly on equality issues, in particular hate crimes and their impact to community cohesion.

Equality Objective 3 - To ensure Council services are accessible to all

- Commit to producing easy to read documents
- Ensure that customer's access needs are met at the first point of contact
- Continue to monitor the accessibility of our website and address access for those at risk of digital exclusion.
- Aim to be a dementia-friendly organisation in the workplace and for our customers.
- Provide mandatory training to all front line staff to ensure customer best practice is intrinsic throughout the council i.e. awareness sessions on deafness and dementia.

Equality Objective 4 – Promote equality of opportunity as an employer.

- Ensure equality analysis is undertaken from an employment perspective for all restructures and reorganisations.
- Ensure managers are aware of fair recruitment and issues such as reasonable adjustments.