



Report for:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	15 December 2020
Part:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	<b>Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy</b>
Contact:	Mark Gaynor Corporate Director Housing and Regeneration Councillor Andrew Williams Leader of the Council
Purpose of report:	For Cabinet to consider the updated Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Action plan for the first two years. It also proposes that Full Council formally adopt the International Holocaust Alliance definition of antisemitism
Recommendations to Cabinet 20 October	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 That Cabinet approve the draft Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan (as set out in the report).</li> <li>2 That Cabinet recommend to Council that the the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism be adopted as set out in the report and the illustrative examples that are presented alongside.</li> <li>3 That Cabinet recommend Council approve the new post for a Diversity and Community Inclusion Officer be included as part of the 2021/22 budget as set out in section 5 of this report.</li> </ol>
Period for post policy/project review	It is proposed that a mid-year and annual reports be made to Cabinet and the Housing and Community Overview Scrutiny Committee.
Corporate objectives:	<i>Community Capacity:</i> The aim of the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is to help ensure that all of our staff and residents feel welcome, that their views can be heard and that there is better understanding between different groups. This requires that we build a better understanding of the diversity of our community to help channel services to meet needs. It will encourage joint working with the community and voluntary sector across a wide range of groups takes account of their views and assists the Council

	<p>in its service design. This will help ensure we and residents have a better understanding of the needs of different parts of our community.</p>
<p>Implications:</p> <p>'Value for money' implications.</p>	<p>The Strategy will be delivered through a working group including representatives from different parts of the Council. One proposal in the report is that a specific officer be appointed to lead this work and for this to be considered in the budget setting for 2021/22. There will be considerable outreach work in conjunction with local groups and the voluntary sector and specifically with Community Action Dacorum to ensure there is a large element of community input and ownership. An improved database will assist in officers producing their Community Impact assessments and associated policy and decision making for the Council as a whole.</p> <p>By adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism the Council will be formalising its already held position regarding its opposition to racial prejudice and intolerance of the Jewish community locally and across the world.</p> <p>By improving the Councils work on diversity it will reduce the chances of being legally challenged that it is failing its equality duties under the 2010 Equalities Act. Should a new post be approved in the 2021/22 budget then this will reduce any reliance on more expensive consultancy support.</p>
Risk implications	<p>Very low though there is a risk of failing to meet our statutory responsibilities under the Equalities Act if we don't have an up to date externally focused policy and practice and potential legal challenge.</p>
Community Impact Assessment	<p>The main aim of the proposal is to improve community understanding and intelligence regarding the specific needs of the varying groups that we have and to improve communication with groups protected under the Equalities Act 2010</p>
Health and safety Implications	N/A
Monitoring Officer/ S.151 Officer Comments	<p><b>Monitoring Officer</b></p> <p>The strategy and action plan will help to ensure that the Council complies with its obligations under the Equalities Act 2010.</p> <p><b>Deputy S151 Officer</b></p> <p>The proposed Diversity and Community Inclusion officer post will be included in the budget report to cabinet as part of the proposed 21/22 budget approval process.</p>

Consultees:	
Background papers:	
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	IHRA: International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance

## 1. Background

- 1.1 The Council takes its responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 very seriously and recognises that updating its strategy and action plan is critical for this to be achieved. This report sets out the new strategy and Appendix One the provisional action plan.
- 1.2 Many changes have occurred both local and nationally over the past few years. Dacorum has become a much more diverse community with immigration of people from the European Union who have chosen to remain as part of the Dacorum community. There is also internal migration into the Borough from other areas particularly London which results in a more diverse community. There is far more tolerance and welcoming of difference regarding the gay and lesbian community though still much work to be done in getting acceptance of the Transgender community.
- 1.3 There have also been some tensions nationally with the Brexit process and fear of terrorism having caused friction between communities in parts of the UK. The Black Lives Matter movement has demonstrated that in the UK we haven't made the progress we thought that we had, with poorer prospects, opportunities, and treatment for a wide range of black and minority ethnic groups still very much the reality. These are societal challenges which the Council alone cannot solve but we can demonstrate that we do hold all of our residents to be of equal importance.
- 1.4 This Strategy and Action plan is aimed at updating and improving our community relations and services to everyone by increasing our knowledge of the specific views and needs to be met.

## 2 Overall Purpose

- 2.1 The key purpose of the proposed strategy is to ensure that at Dacorum Borough Council, we aim to promote equality in everything we do. This means treating people fairly, valuing diversity and removing barriers that prevent people being able to fully participate in public life and fulfil their potential. This includes the way in which we:
- plan, commission and deliver services to the community
  - treat our employees and people who apply for jobs with the Council
  - take decisions in our various regulatory functions
  - work as a community leader

- work in partnership with other organisations in Dacorum and Hertfordshire
  - enter into contracts or tender to provide goods and services.
- 2.2 We will monitor and review the way we work, and support our employees to fulfil our legal responsibilities for equality. This will help us to address disadvantages that may impact on members of our community for any reason, but particularly because of their age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief marital or civil partnership status or pregnancy and maternity status. These are collectively the ‘Protected Characteristics’ defined in the Equality Act 2010.
- 2.3 Our Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy provides a blueprint for creating an inclusive environment for all our staff, and also provides a framework to ensure that we deliver an appropriate and inclusive service to residents on each and every contact.

### **3 Key aims and actions**

- 3.1 In the period 2021 to 2023 we will focus on the achievement of the following 10 aims:
1. A representative workforce; reflecting the diverse makeup of the area in which we operate
  2. A Continuation of encouraging our staff to challenge stereotyping and discriminatory practices: within the offices and outside
  3. That staff and Members continue to receive the latest information and best practice and training on equality, diversity and belonging, including neurodiversity
  4. Ensuring that our procurement practices require contractors and suppliers demonstrate a genuine culture of inclusion and equality of opportunity
  5. Further promotion of our zero-tolerance approach towards hate incidents and hate crime
  6. Improving our performance in ensuring resident-facing policies, procedures are subject to effective community impact assessments
  7. Residents representing all protected characteristics are encouraged to become involved in helping to shape services, policies etc.
  8. That victims and survivors of domestic abuse (residents and colleagues) are supported and signposted to the most appropriate agencies
  9. Increased awareness within the Council, partner agencies and the public of diversity-related safeguarding issues including extremism and radicalisation, child sexual exploitation, modern slavery and young gangs. This will involve the continued Council’s contribution to their successful resolution in conjunction with our partners
  10. Develop working relations with more “third sector” agencies representing and supporting diverse communities and groups
- 3.2 Early action will be focused on:

- Ensuring the Council has the necessary resource in terms of skills and experience within the workforce to deliver the objectives of the strategy
- To introduce up to date policies on Modern Slavery and Hate Crime
- To create a representative diversity database regarding our community
- To achieve 'Disability Confident' which is the up to date replacement for the 'Two ticks' status.
- Updating our Procurement and contractor requirements and compliance with the updated DBC standards
- Increased employee involvement in our diversity work
- The incorporation of diversity into all Service Planning
- Ensuring Community involvement in our work on diversity

#### 4. Adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism.

##### 4.1 Background

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) brings together governments and experts to strengthen, advance and promote Holocaust education, research and remembrance. The IHRA, which was formerly known as the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research was initiated in 1998 by former Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson. The IHRA's membership includes of 31 member countries, including the United Kingdom.

##### 4.2 The IHRA supports policymakers and educational institutions and briefs government officials and NGOs active in global initiatives for genocide prevention.

The United Kingdom has been member of the IHRA since it was founded in 1998. The UK delegation consists of representatives from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, academia, voluntary sector including the London Jewish Cultural Centre. On 26 May 2016 in Bucharest, the Plenary of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) adopted a non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism:

**“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”**

##### 4.3 The IHRA is the only intergovernmental organization mandated to focus solely on Holocaust-related issues, so with evidence that the scourge of antisemitism is once again on the rise, we resolved to take a leading role in combatting it. IHRA experts determined that in order to begin to address

the problem of antisemitism, there must be clarity about what antisemitism is.

4.4 The IHRA's Committee on Antisemitism and Holocaust Denial worked to build international consensus around a non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism, which was subsequently adopted by the Plenary. By doing so, the IHRA set an example of responsible conduct for other international fora and provided an important tool with practical applicability for its Member Countries. This is just one illustration of how the IHRA has equipped policymakers to address this rise in hate and discrimination at their national level.

4.5 To guide IHRA in its work, the following examples may serve as illustrations and it is proposed that the Council accept all of these:

Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for "why things go wrong." It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.

- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for the acts of the state of Israel

## **5 Diversity and Community Inclusion Officer**

- 5.1 The strategy and action plan set out below will require dedicated resource in order to deliver the objectives set out and meet the requirements both of the 2010 Equalities Act but a wide range of additional areas that the government has required Local Authorities to take responsibility for. These include safeguarding, modern slavery, hate crime and a key role in the prevention of terrorism and extremism. Whilst we do have an up to date strategy regarding our staff, recruitment and challenging discrimination and so on we do not have one that is focused externally. The action plan setting out the responsibilities of the officer, working with all services across the Council and with the local community, is set out below.
- 5.2 The Council has not had a dedicated resource on this area since around 2007 and currently does not have the capacity within to deliver the requirements of the strategy. The post, which will initially be a Fixed Term Contract for three years, will allow the Council to have an outward focused approach to diversity and inclusion which be working with key community groups, beginning with Community Action Dacorum, representing the increasingly diverse community in which we live. It is important to note that the focus of such work has moved on substantially in recent years and covers areas like Domestic Abuse, Modern Slavery, Safeguarding, Physical and Mental disabilities, hate crime and the work on countering extremism and helping build a more inclusive community.
- 5.3 It is recommended that the three year fixed term post of Diversity and Community Inclusion Officer is included in the budget for 2021/22.

**Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy  
2021-23**

(Draft)

## **Foreword (Chief Exec / Leader)**

True equality is more than simply identifying the different communities that are represented in Dacorum. It is about ensuring we understand the needs of our residents from a range of diverse backgrounds and enable our increasingly diverse community to thrive.

At Dacorum Borough Council, we aim to promote equality in everything we do. This means treating people fairly, valuing diversity and removing barriers that prevent people being able to fully participate in public life and fulfil their potential.

This includes the way in which we:

- plan, commission and deliver services to the community
- treat our employees and people who apply for jobs with the Council
- take decisions in our various regulatory functions
- work as a community leader
- work in partnership with other organisations in Dacorum and Hertfordshire
- enter into contracts or tender to provide goods and services.

We will monitor and review the way we work, and support our employees to fulfil our legal responsibilities for equality. This will help us to address disadvantages that may impact on members of our community for any reason, but particularly because of their age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief marital or civil partnership status or pregnancy and maternity status. These are collectively the 'Protected Characteristics' defined in the Equality Act 2010.

Our Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy provides a blueprint for creating an inclusive environment for all our staff, and also provides a framework to ensure that we deliver an appropriate and inclusive service to residents on each and every contact.

**Signed**

**Chief Executive**

**Leader**

## Introduction

This strategy has been developed during 2020 with the coronavirus pandemic having a direct effect on people's mental health, isolation, increased cases of domestic abuse, job losses and homelessness disproportionately affecting certain groups. Assisting these groups has been, and will remain, a major priority for the Council. The Council's own working practices have also changed beyond recognition with home working and more limited access to offices, thus impacting on the customer experience for residents.

International movements such as the progression of 'Me Too' and the more recent "Black Lives Matter" have been raised in importance by ordinary people, traditional media and social media. Also in the media has been the issues around "trans" rights. All of these are taken into account in this Strategy and in the Equalities and Diversity Action Plan.

But it doesn't stop there. Many people and groups don't have a voice and also face discrimination and harassment. This strategy equally focuses on the needs of disabled people; physical, mental and intellectual, and, although not a protected characteristic, it also aims to improve quality of life for people on low income

In taking equalities further, and to reflect unprecedented changes and international movements during 2020, we have changed our ethos slightly from 'equality, diversity and inclusion' to 'diversity, inclusion and belonging'. The aim will be that diverse colleagues and residents feel truly valued and have a sense of belonging. This will be measured by a mixture of qualitative as well as quantitative data

## Where we are now

Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) is working towards improving diversity and inclusion within the local authority sector. Having researched a variety of assessment frameworks DBC has opted to adopt the Local Authority Equality Framework. It has assessed its performance on equality, diversity and inclusion against the performance areas within the framework, namely:

- Knowing your communities
- Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment
- Involving your communities
- Responsive services and customer care
- A skilled and committed workforce

The framework has three levels of achievement:

'Developing'

'Achieving'

'Excellent'

After careful consideration DBC has assessed its recent performance as between '**Developing**' and '**Achieving**'

The gaps and improvements identified within the self-assessment against the framework, along with existing/outstanding diversity and inclusion actions, and actions emanating from this strategy, form its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (**appendix 1 below**)

## **DBC's Vision**

Our Equalities aim is to:

**“Challenge discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, improve access to services, champion mutual respect and increase participation in local decisions”**

To help achieve this we have developed this two-year strategy and action plan to further our performance in respect of equality, diversity and inclusion to fully **‘Achieving’** in the Local Authority Equality Framework, with ‘Excellent’ in our vision.

## **The legal side**

In addition to the Equality Act 2010, this strategy also takes into account relevant provisions within the Care Act 2014, the Anti Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. This strategy should be read alongside DBC's:

- Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adult's Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

The Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011 are now well embedded and DBC continues to commit to the three requirements of the Duty, namely to have due regard in its employment and operations 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

The protected characteristics referred to above are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

This strategy explains how DBC will endeavour to meet its requirements in the Public Sector Equality Duty.

## **Eliminate unlawful discrimination**

As an employer and in its role in delivering services DBC must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination. The Equality Act identifies six types of discrimination; direct discrimination, discrimination by association, discrimination by perception, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

DBC's Corporate Plan sets out the vision, ambitions and plans for the next few years and are indelibly linked to equality, diversity and inclusion. Strategic priorities in respect of its employment obligations will include:

- Attract, recruit and retain talent
- Develop high quality leadership and management
- Develop individual and collective performance
- Engage and include Employees

The Corporate Plan explicitly state DBC's commitment to ensure the highest standards of equality, diversity and inclusion.

All colleagues receive mandatory introductory training on equality, diversity and inclusion and follow up refresher training every three years.

All colleagues (and customer groups where practicable) will be trained on the Social Model of Disability. This model, adopted by the World Health Organisation and UK Government, separates impairment from disability and is seen as a more positive way of identifying and removing barriers to communication and access.

Gender pay gap – DBC engages fully with the requirement to report on and publicise the salaries received by women and men within the organisation.

A core element at DBC, from the top and through all roles, is the expectation that every colleague has the right to challenge and where necessary report anyone within DBC they feel are negatively stereotyping, speaking or acting in prejudicial terms, bullying or harassing or discriminating in any way, without fear of repercussion.

## **Advance / promote equality of opportunity**

Advance / promote equality of opportunity is defined as the need to

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people who share a relevant protected characteristic
- meet the needs of people who share a relevant protected characteristic where these are different from the needs of people who do not share it
- encourage people who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

DBC is committed to extending and improving the data it collects in order to identify gaps or trends and tailor its services where possible to advance equality of opportunity.

DBC will make use of provisions within the Equality Act 2010 to adopt positive action, where appropriate, to ensure colleagues and residents (to some degree), reflect as much as is reasonable, the diversity demographics of the local area.

The Equality Act 2010 also allows for 'more favourable treatment' in respect of disabled colleagues and residents and we will utilise these provisions when required. DBC will also continue to support the Job Centre Plus "Disability Confident" programme.

DBC aims to be a 'gay-friendly' organisation. It is committed to promoting equality within the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender (LGBT) communities. It will review its training activities, newsletter articles, support of regional LGBT activities and will continue to have a **zero tolerance** towards homophobic bullying, harassment or discrimination in addition to its stance on tackling homophobic hate incidents and hate crime.

### **Data collection**

DBC is aware of the importance in collecting diversity data but recognises that previous resident profiling needs updating and this strategy will take full account of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 in ensuring only data meeting that strict criteria will be collected. This strategy focuses on the effect of a resident's protected characteristic on access and communication, resulting in much more effective outcomes. Although some specific data is required by regulatory authorities, residents will become much more familiar with DBC colleagues asking if they have "any additional or specific needs or requirements we should be aware of".

### **Foster good relations**

Fostering good relations is defined as the need to

- tackle prejudice, and
- promote understanding

DBC will continue to work with voluntary and support groups for a variety of diverse communities within the areas it operates. With the long standing funding constraints in the statutory services associated with local authorities, such as social services and community mental health teams, fostering relations with community groups and the "third sector" has never been more relevant and necessary.

### **Our residents**

Only by understanding who lives and works in DBC will we be able to provide appropriate and good quality services that meet the needs of our Borough's different communities. The information we hold about our communities is not adequate and we shall endeavor through the timeframe of this strategy to ensure that we evaluate and fully understand the needs of our Community. Using

available information (internally and externally) to date we will develop an improved resident profile of DBC.

### **Delivering equalities at Dacorum**

DBC will take responsibility to ensure that equality is integrated into service delivery and this strategy demonstrates our commitment to embedding equality and diversity practices in everything we do.

The strategy intends to:

- Inform Councillors, staff and the local community
- Provide direction, policy and initiatives
- Co-ordinate activity across the Council and ensure it is monitored and evaluated

The Council complies with the legal framework as set out by the Equality Act 2010. In order for the Council to deliver on its top priorities, our equality objectives seek to ensure there are appropriate processes and structures in place, as follows:

- Performance management systems are in place
- Assistant Directors and Group Managers, through their Service Plans have the day to day responsibility of ensuring improvements identified by service planning / community impact assessments are carried out.
- Will work to establish an equality and diversity forum which has the ability to challenge the Council and work with the Council on this strategy.

We aim to ensure that high quality service standards and equality are always maintained. In order to improve access to all, every service user has the right to:

- Receive accessible services and facilities and to be free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Be treated with respect and be provided with accurate and up to date information about Council services
- Feel able to access Council services and not feel excluded due to their gender, race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion and belief, age, marital status, level of income, family responsibility and educational attainment.
- Be consulted, directly or through appropriate representatives or groups on the way the Council Plan delivers its services.
- Assurance that contracts with providers and services will be incorporated appropriately with equality principles and that performance against these will be monitored.
- Expect us to procure goods from companies that have in place arrangements to comply with the Council's equality and diversity commitments
- Give feedback and raise complaints about services through clear and easy to use complaints/compliments procedure
- Contribute to the Council's decision making process through consultation and other means. This includes all user representative groups, community groups and those who historically have been under represented.

## ***Other factors***

### **Extremism**

DBC takes the Government's Prevent Duty seriously. It is very mindful of the need to make colleagues aware of the safeguarding and national security implications of extremism and radicalisation.

### **Hate Crime**

DBC's zero-tolerance of Hate Crime has already been mentioned in this document. The Home Office recognised motivators of Hate Crime are Disability, Gender Reassignment (Transphobia), Race, Religion and Sexual Orientation (Homophobia). DBC recognises the need for this to be dealt with differently from general ASB as hate crime is often targeted towards an individual and therefore has potential for repeat incidents. DBC will develop a robust Hate Crime Policy and this will be communicated to colleagues and residents.

### **Domestic Abuse / Violence**

Following good practice nationally Dacorum has in place a bespoke Domestic Abuse Policy aimed at protecting all victims and survivors, irrespective of gender or sexual orientation or any other protected characteristic.

Dacorum is mindful of the fact its colleagues can also be victims and survivors of Domestic Abuse and to this end will develop a Domestic Abuse Policy for colleagues.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. DBC has in place a Safeguarding Policy for Children and Young People. Although CSE is addressed in the policy and in Safeguarding training sessions, Dacorum also includes awareness of CSE in Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging training and reporting mechanisms such as Concern cards.

### **Supporting the Government's Serious Violence Strategy**

The Serious Violence Strategy was published by the Home Office in April 2018. Although much of the strategy is about law enforcement, it also looks at the root causes of the problem and how to support young people to lead productive lives away from violence.

Action in the strategy is centered on 4 main themes:

- tackling county lines and misuse of drugs
- early intervention and prevention
- supporting communities and local partnerships
- law enforcement and the criminal justice response

DBC will raise awareness in Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Training and in Safeguarding Training of the increasing problems associated with 'county lines', where young people are being recruited into drugs trafficking and dealing outside of the big cities, and 'cuckooing', where vulnerable people have their homes taken over for drugs dealing and in some cases prostitution.

### **Modern Slavery**

Modern slavery is a complex crime that takes a number of different forms. It encompasses slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking.

Diversity and Inclusion training sessions and Safeguarding training sessions include examples of Modern Slavery and encourage participants to be familiar with signs and to raise concerns with mechanisms such as the Concern Card.

### **Community Impact Assessments**

DBC is keen in the lifetime of this strategy to improve the frequency and quality of Community Impact Assessments (CIAs). In the past many colleagues have found CIAs (previously EqIAs) to be cumbersome and without clarity or outcome. The new process is much more user-friendly and the aim is for all new policies, decisions, restructures and anything else with potential impact on colleagues or residents to have a CIA in place at time of Executive consideration.

### **Procurement**

Contractors, suppliers and consultants working for or on behalf of DBC represent the face of the organisation and must therefore share the same ethos and approach to diversity and inclusion and the concept of identifying and removing barriers.

Those working with DBC, and any sub-contractors will be expected, in addition to standard partnering terms, to:

- 'Sign up' to this strategy and its objectives
- Provide DBC with relevant requested diversity data on their workforce
- In partnering arrangements agree to invest in and send relevant staff to appropriate diversity and safeguarding training opportunities at DBC
- Report to key DBC colleagues cases where they suspect the safety of children or vulnerable adults may be at risk

### **Unconscious bias**

Implicit or unconscious bias happens by our brains making incredibly quick judgments and assessments of people and situations without us realising. DBC recognises the need for awareness training to colleagues, and in particular to recruiters and decision makers, on unconscious bias, to enable them to become aware of the groups of people they may have an unconscious bias towards and take action to address it when necessary.

## **Neurodiversity**

Neurodiversity is a relatively new term that refers to people who have autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia, Tourette's, ADHD and other neurological conditions. DBC recognises that all too often we focus on the challenges associated with neurodiverse colleagues and customers, rather than the strengths. Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging training at DBC from 2020 will include awareness training on neurodiversity, estimated to affect about 1 in 5. The awareness training will include factors such as recruitment and performance in the workplace and tailoring support to individuals in the workplace and outside.

## **Involving customers**

DBC recognises that people have differing needs and expectations, and will continue to provide a range of ways in which residents can become involved in discussing their views, including ensuring there are alternatives to formal meetings.

DBC will ensure that non-Council venues used for Council events and purposes are checked for accessibility and other diversity requirements such as food provision and staff awareness.

## **Colleagues**

DBC is proud of its diverse colleague base and genuinely believe respect and inclusion is part of its culture. There is always room for improvement and during the life of this strategy DBC will analyse the representation of colleagues compared to the demographic diversity of the areas in which it operates. This will be done taking full account of GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. If gaps or trends are identified it will take a proactive role in narrowing or correcting these, including consultation with colleagues, diversity groups within the community, and the use of positive action to encourage under-represented groups to apply for vacancies.

DBC will endeavor to make full use of opportunities within its Apprenticeship Levy to develop a new generation of local authority professionals.

Excellent customer service is about knowing who your residents are and what their specific needs or requirements are, already mentioned in this strategy, but it also requires a happy and inclusive workforce. Throughout the life of this strategy DBC will develop a Diversity and Inclusion Sub-Group predominantly comprising colleagues representing the various protected characteristics – this will liaise directly with the internal Health and Wellbeing Group. It will actively engage with and empower this group in an attempt to improve morale, inclusiveness and general quality of life for all colleagues in what is recognised as a very stressful sector to work in. Activities such as social events, cultural festivities, dress-down days, celebration of national foods and charity events will form part the promotion of diversity within the organisation.

## **DBC's 10 point commitment**

In addition to the Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy Statement, DBC has chosen a simple 10 point commitment to equalities, diversity and inclusion to summarise its priorities.

## **Dacorum Borough Council's commitment to Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion**

In the period 2021 to 2023 we will focus on the following 10 aims:

- 1 Ensuring that the Council has a representative workforce; reflecting the diverse makeup of the area in which we operate
- 2 A continuation of encourage staff to challenge stereotyping and discriminatory practices: within the offices and outside
- 3 That Members and staff continue to receive the latest best practice and training on equality, diversity and belonging, including neurodiversity
- 4 That our procurement practices continue to ensure contractors and suppliers demonstrate a genuine culture of inclusion and equality of opportunity
- 5 Further promotion of our zero-tolerance approach towards hate incidents and hate crime
- 6 Improve our performance in ensuring resident-facing policies and procedures are subject to effective community impact assessments
- 7 That victims and survivors of domestic abuse (residents and colleagues) are supported and signposted to the most appropriate agencies
- 8 That residents representing all protected characteristics are encouraged to become involved in shaping services
- 9 Increase awareness of diversity-related safeguarding issues including extremism and radicalisation, child sexual exploitation, modern slavery and young gangs among staff, Members and the community
- 10 Develop working relations with more "third sector" agencies representing and supporting diverse communities and groups

	Action	Who's responsible	Support from	Any Budget / Resource requirement	Target completion date	RAG	Current progress / comments
1	<p><b>Diversity and Community Inclusion Officer</b></p> <p>The development and implementation of the plan will require dedicated resource. Whilst this could be provided by consultancy support in the first instance for resilience and ownership it should be a permanent post</p>	CMT/Cabinet/ Council	Equalities and Diversity Reference Group	Yes	Budget agreement Feb 2021 Post filled May 2021		Case for creating and funding the post will be included in Cabinet report in December
2	<p><b>Modern Slavery Statement and policy</b></p> <p>A DBC specific Slavery and Human Trafficking statement is required under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (to be updated annually) together with a specific</p>	Diversity and Community Inclusion Officer Safeguarding officer CMT/Cabinet	Equalities and Diversity Reference Group	Minimal	Summer 2021		
3	<p><b>Hate Crime Policy</b></p> <p>Produce Hate Crime Policy (stand-alone) to ensure zero-tolerance towards all forms of 'hate' - communicate appropriately to colleagues and residents</p>	Diversity and Community Inclusion Officer Safeguarding officer CMT/Cabinet	Equalities and Diversity Reference Group	Minimal	Summer 2021		
4	<p><b>Diversity database</b></p> <p>Review use of resident profiling information and data. Identify best use of this to improve services to vulnerable people and those with specific needs or requirements.</p>	Diversity and Community Inclusion Officer	Equalities and Diversity Reference Group	Low	Ongoing		

	Action	Who's responsible	Support from	Any Budget / Resource requirement	Target completion date	RAG	Current progress / comments
5	<p><b>Community Impact Assessments</b></p> <p>Introduce effective and workable system of Community Impact Assessments (CIA), including a corporate procedure; with key colleagues trained on its use.</p>			N/A	N/A		<b>Achieved</b>
6	<p><b>Disability Confident Programme</b></p> <p>This replaces the disability 'two ticks' and now need to review DBC's approach to allow adherence to the Disability Confident Scheme Ensure managers of people are trained in the Social Model of Disability (adopted by UK government and World Health Organisation as it separates impairment from disability and better identifies barriers to overcome)</p>	Diversity and Community Inclusion Officer HR CMT/Cabinet	Equalities and Diversity Reference Group	Yes			
7	<p><b>Procurement and Contractor compliance</b></p> <p>We already require prospective contractors and partners to demonstrate compliance with DBC's Equalities, Diversity &amp; Inclusion Strategy at tender stage. Review how we monitor and control this.</p>	Diversity and Community Inclusion Officer Procurement Team		No	Ongoing as contracts require re-procurement		Refinement rather than complete redraft

	Action	Who's responsible	Support from	Any Budget / Resource requirement	Target completion date	RAG	Current progress / comments
8	<p><b>LGTB</b></p> <p>Review the Council's approach to the LGTB community (both staff and residents) to ensure a better understanding and recognition of needs, and appropriate action to improve</p>	Diversity and Community Inclusion Officer HR	Equalities and Diversity Reference Group		ongoing		
9	<p><b>Employee demographic profile</b></p> <p>Current diversity profile of employees and comparison with general demographic profile is incomplete – identify approaches to redress any information gaps and imbalances. Consider the adoption of positive action (as defined by Equality Act 2010) when under-representation has been identified.</p>	Diversity and Community Inclusion Officer HR	Equalities and Diversity Reference Group	Low	March 2022		
10	<p><b>Employee involvement</b></p> <p>Review effectiveness of colleague groups in highlighting and addressing any specific diversity actions related to protected characteristics. Review need for separate groups, or having a single/combined diversity forum. Work with internal Health &amp; Wellbeing Group and adapting their terms of reference to include Diversity and Inclusion.</p>	Diversity and Community Inclusion Officer, HR, Work with internal Health & Wellbeing Group and adapting their terms of reference to include Diversity and Inclusion.	Equalities and Diversity Reference Group	N/A	Ongoing		

	Action	Who's responsible	Support from	Any Budget / Resource requirement	Target completion date	R A G	Current progress / comments
11	<b>Incorporation of equality and diversity action in Service Plans</b> Delivery of requirements emerging from the action plan	ADs/GMs		N/A	Annual		
12	<b>Broadening liaison with and involvement of community and interest groups</b> Liaise with the 'third sector' to explore the possibility of an equalities and diversity forum and/or direct communication with organisations from protected groups	Diversity and Community Inclusion Officer Community Partnerships	Equalities and Diversity Reference Group Community Action Dacorum	Yes			