

Title of meeting: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 3 October 2023

Subject: Draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

Report by: Head of marketing communications and engagement

Wards affected: All

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

To seek approval from Cabinet to take the draft equality, diversity and inclusion strategy to public consultation.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet approves the draft equality, diversity and inclusion strategy be consulted on before a final version of the strategy is brought to a future meeting for adoption.

3. Background

- 3.1 Work has been underway to create the next iteration of the council's equality, diversity and inclusion strategy which will cover the period 2023-2026.
- 3.2 A draft strategy is now complete (Appendix A) and before it is put to Cabinet as a final version, permission is being sought to undertake public consultation to give residents and other stakeholders an opportunity to give feedback before a final version is presented to Cabinet.
- 3.3 The strategy is based on the Local Government Association's [Equality Framework for Local Government](#). The Framework has three levels: developing, achieving and excellent.
- 3.4 A self-assessment exercise was carried out which gathered information and views from a range of staff in roles relevant to the extensive criteria on the framework. It found the council to be at the developing level across the four modules of the framework. A summary of the self-assessment can be seen in the strategy, Appendix A.

- 3.5 While the overall level for each module was developing, there were a significant number of areas ranked as achieving and pockets of excellence throughout the organisation but often no consistent approach throughout the council.
- 3.6 As well as assessing our current position, the self-assessment exercise asked for a view on what it would take to improve against the various criteria and this has given an indication of how the council may achieve a better rating in the future.
- 3.7 In many areas plans are already in train or in development to improve equalities outcomes which would be expected to lead to improved scoring on the Equality Framework for Local Government.
- 3.8 Alongside the internal self-assessment exercise research was carried out with residents representing communities with protected characteristics to ensure we align our strategy with their priorities.
- 3.9 By reaching out through voluntary and community sector organisations we recruited to two workshops and carried out an online survey. An informal workshop was also conducted with members of the Youth Cabinet. The recruitment was successful in reaching those with protected characteristics, with a greater proportion taking part in the survey and workshops than would be found in the average sample of Portsmouth residents as illustrated in the table below.

Characteristic	Census 2021 Portsmouth (%)	Survey respondents (%)	Workshop participants (%)
Sexual orientation other than heterosexual	5	21	12
Identifying with a gender different to sex registered at birth	0.7	2	4
Ethnic group other than white British	22	27	59
Have a disability	20	22	26

Full results can be seen on the Your City Your Say section of the council website under [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion \(EDI\) Draft Strategy Research](#)

- 3.10 While the council's aim is ultimately to achieve the highest possible standards relating to equality and diversity, we need to consider our current position and the resources available to deliver improvements and to prioritise activity with a set of realistic and achievable targets to work towards. Therefore, this strategy focuses on plans for the coming years to move the council to achieving level and set the foundations in place to reach excellent level in the future while we continue to embed an inclusive culture.



4. Reasons for recommendations

It is important residents and other stakeholders can hear their voice within strategy documents such as this one and a public consultation would provide this.

5. Integrated impact assessment

An integrated impact assessment is not required as the recommendations are about developing an equality and diversity strategy, not specific details of how it would be implemented so therefore do not have a significant positive or negative impact on communities and safety, regeneration and culture, environment and public space or equality and diversity.

6. Legal implications

The Equality framework assists local councils in meeting their obligations under the Equality Act 2012 and their Public Sector Equality Duties. The development of a strategy underpins the demonstration of those duties.

7. Director of Finance's comments

The consultation estimated cost of £2,000 will be met from the overall Resources portfolio budget.

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Signed by:

Appendices:

Appendix A - draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Office for National Statistics Census custom data sets	https://www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/create



The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/
rejected by on

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Signed by: