

North East Derbyshire Council

Services Scrutiny Committee

Equality Plan and Duty Review 2024/25

9th September 2025

Report of the Information & Improvement Manager

Classification: This report is public

Report By: Kath Drury, Information & Improvement Manager

Contact Officer: As above

PURPOSE / SUMMARY

To report progress on the Equality Plan 2023-27 action plan and to demonstrate our continuing compliance with the Equality Duty.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That progress against the objectives set within the Equality Plan 2023-2027 and ongoing compliance with the Equality Duty be noted.
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IMPLICATIONS

Finance and Risk: Yes ☐ No ☒

Details:

On Behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes ☐ No ☒

Details

On Behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Staffing: Yes ☐ No ☒

Details:

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

Decision Information	
Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: NEDDC: Revenue - £125,000 ☐ Capital - £310,000 ☐ ☒ <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i>	No
Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)	No
District Wards Significantly Affected	None
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) details:	
Stage 1 screening undertaken Completed EIA stage 1 to be appended if not required to do a stage 2	N/A - information only report
Stage 2 full assessment undertaken Completed EIA stage 2 needs to be appended to the report	No, not applicable
Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader ☐ Cabinet ☐ SMT ☒ Relevant Service Manager ☐ Members ☐ Public ☐ Other ☐	Yes Details:

Links to Council Plan priorities; A great place that cares for the environment A great place to live well A great place to work A great place to access good public services
The Equality Duty and Plan is an underpinning foundation to the Council Plan.

REPORT DETAILS

1 **Background**

- 1.1 We are required under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to set equality objectives every four years. Our Equality Plan 2023-2027 set four objectives to further our work under the Equality Duty.
- 1.2 These objectives are in addition to our general equality duty obligations to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not under the Equality Act.

2. **Details of Proposal or Information**

2.1 **General Equality Duty**

The attached Equality Plan and Duty Review provides some examples of how we are meeting our obligations under the three core strands of the Equality Act.

- 2.2 This progress reflects our ongoing commitment to embedding equality, diversity, and inclusion across all areas of service delivery and the organisation.

2.3 **Eliminating discrimination, victimisation, and harassment**

A strong commitment to equality and inclusion across both internal practices and community engagement is evidenced. All Council employees continue to receive regular equalities and diversity training via the online platform, supported by expert guidance from the corporate team—ensuring high levels of awareness that enhance service delivery and customer care. In response to legal developments, guidance was issued to staff and managers following the Supreme Court ruling on sex under the Equality Act 2010. Regarding community cohesion, nearly 60% of residents (1,953 out of 3,269 respondents, Residents' Survey) agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area.

The Council continues to support victims of hate crime through its online self-service reporting portal, which received six reports in 2024/25. Victims are offered assistance, including referrals to partner agencies. Following a spate of hate-related graffiti in Dronfield, the Council successfully secured funding for a community graffiti project, with artwork inspired by local schoolchildren.

2.4 **Advancing equality of opportunity**

This is a very strong area for the Council with the ability to have real impact. Reasonable adjustments are available for communication formats, and mental health is actively promoted. Equality Impact Assessments help identify and support inclusive practices. In 2024/25, over 21,000 vulnerable households and 356 adults received targeted support, while more than 18,500 residents

participated in inclusive physical and social activities. Accessibility improvements include Changing Places facilities, Water Wellbeing sessions, and a highly rated website for accessibility. The refurbished Head Office reception enhances public access. Employment pathways at the Council were strengthened through apprenticeships, trainee posts, and work experience placements. The Residents' Survey gathered inclusive demographic insights, and efforts continue to improve workforce data collection.

2.5 Fostering good relations between communities

Made meaningful progress in strengthening relationships with the Deaf community, most notably through the successful Deaf Community Engagement event held in May 2025. The event was met with positive feedback and marked a significant step in building a collaborative partnership with the British Deaf Association. Responding to insights gathered during the event, the Council is exploring how best to seek insights from the deaf community for the Residents Survey in November 2025.

A wide range of diversity days have been actively promoted, including International Women's Day, Pride, Race Equality Week, and others, alongside awareness campaigns such as Hate Crime Awareness Week. Internally, staff events have provided opportunities for employees of different ages and backgrounds to connect, reinforcing the Council's One Team culture.

2.6 Equality Plan Action Plan

Regarding our Equality Plan 2023-2027 objectives which further our work under the Equality Duty, the following progress has been made by objective:

Improving Customer and Resident Insight

- Residents' Survey successfully delivered with 3,269 responses, showing improved representation across age, ethnicity, and disability.
- Demographic Reporting embedded into biennial Residents' survey planning; full report and infographic published.
- Citizens' Panel rebranded and promoted across the district as the Citizens' Survey. Both response rates and diversity has improved.
- Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs): Two-stage process implemented; six EIAs submitted in 2025/26 so far. This provides consistent information to decision-makers and improves transparency via published council reports.

Leadership and Organisational Commitment

- Bespoke equality training sessions delivered to managers and councillors; new EIA forms embedded in council reports.

- Internal Equalities Group established via Teams channel with active departmental engagement.
- Celebrating Diversity: Events like International Women's Day, Race Equality Week, and Deaf Awareness Week promoted through comms and social media.
- Public Sector Equality Duty Compliance reviewed; annual reporting to begin summer 2025.

Diverse and Engaged Workforce

- Workforce data collection actively sought from job applicants and new starters. Existing employees being encouraged to provide also. This will be made easier when the new HR and Payroll system is fully implemented.
- HR policy reviews now include equalities considerations; anti-harassment guidance implemented.
- Mandatory equality and diversity training embedded in induction and refreshed biennially. The Council's new training platform is now well embedded.
- Employee engagement supported through multiple forums and meetings.
- People Strategy and online learning platform launched.
- Workforce Health and Wellbeing programme enhancements in progress.

British Sign Language (BSL) Charter Commitments

- As noted in 2.5.

- 2.7 Progress against our Equality Plan demonstrates strong organisational commitment to equalities, with most actions either completed or embedded. Key achievements include enhanced resident insight, improved workforce diversity monitoring and engagement and strengthened leadership on equalities. Remaining actions focus on data mapping, consultation policy refresh, and expanding BSL-related resources.

3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 This is an information report to keep Scrutiny Members informed of progress against the objectives set in the Equality Plan 2023-2027 and to demonstrate our continuing compliance with the Equality Duty.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 Not applicable to this report as providing an overview of progress towards and compliance with our Equality Act obligations.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendix No	Title
1	Equality Plan and Duty Review Document for 2024/25
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet you must provide copies of the background papers)	