

# **Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council**

## **Equality Scheme 2018-21**

*Working better, together*



**Our Equality Scheme Action Plan 2018-21 introduces the five key priorities for the Borough of Welwyn Hatfield.**

**These are:**

- **Leading by Example within the Community**
- **Value and Understand our Communities**
- **Deliver Fully accessible, fair and inclusive Services**
- **Provide equal opportunities to our employees**
- **Consult with residents and the community**

Each key priority has been broken down into key actions for our Equalities Steering Group to manage.

- **Leading by Example within the Community**

Action	By When
Publish our approach to equalities widely	Sept 2018
Engage with groups representing people with protected characteristics	Aug 2018
Ensure that partners and contractors delivering services on our behalf adopt our principles and approach to equalities	Sept 2018
Work with partner organisations and community representatives to monitor the effects of Brexit on community cohesion	March 2019

- **Value and Understand our Communities**

Action	By When
Collect relevant information about our customers so that we can understand more about their needs and preferences for services delivery and to help us identify barriers or potential barriers to accessing our services.	Dec 2018
Act on customer feedback when shaping our services, including information received through our complaints process and regular customer surveys.	Dec 2018
Deliver and support local events aimed at raising awareness of diversity and encourage community participation.	March 2019
We will work with employees, local communities and Members to ensure that our valuing of diversity is reflected in our local democracy.	Oct 2018

▪ **Deliver Fully accessible, fair and inclusive Services**

Action	By When
Publish and implement a new Customer Service Strategy which sets out our commitment to delivering customer-focused services.	Sept 2018
Offer a range of ways for customers to contact us and make sure that council offices and other public areas are accessible to people with limited mobility and different sensory abilities.	Up to March 2020
Make the most of technology to provide 24/7 access to services and to help enable easy access to online services for people with different needs.	Up to 2021
Monitor complaints and investigate where there are concerns that people with one or more protected characteristic are impacted negatively by our services or lack of service provision.	Oct 2018
Assess the impact of our services and policies on our customers, taking into account the diversity of everyone we work with and for.	Sept 2018
Take a consistent approach to carrying out Equality Impact Assessments and ensure the process is clear for employees and simple to implement. Provide training to employees and publish a guidebook which explains how and when they should be carried out.	Sept 2018
Ensure that elected Members understand how to interpret the findings from Equality Impact Assessments so that they can make informed decisions on matters relating to changes to policies and services and the introduction of new ones.	July 2018

▪ **Provide equal opportunities to our employees**

Action	By When
Have in place a Workforce strategy, setting out how we will attract, recruit and foster an effective and diverse workforce, maximising the potential of employees and encouraging people to be best they can be.	Oct 2018
Closely and regularly monitor the demographics of our workforce population and work towards redressing any disparity between the diversity of our community and our employees. We will do this by ensuring that our recruitment processes are fair and job opportunities are widely advertised. We will ensure that officers involved in the recruitment process are trained and understand the council's approach to equality and diversity so that this is reflected in all recruitment processes. We will ensure that the recruitment process is accessible and we will make it clear that we will make reasonable adjustments for applicants so that they do not face barriers during the application process.	Oct 2018

We will promote our positive approach to diversity in the workplace, including providing assurance that we will make reasonable adjustments for employees so that they can participate fully in life as an employee of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council.	Oct 2018
Provide appropriate training to employees and elected Members so that they understand the council's approach to equality and how this translates into service delivery and human resources services for all customers and employees.	July 2018
Ensure that as far as is possible all corporate policies are aligned so that the council's commitment to equal opportunities is reflected in all areas of work.	Oct 2018

▪ **Consult with residents and the community**

Action	By When
Make reasonable adjustments to ensure that there are no barriers to prevent people participating in a way in which they feel comfortable.	Up to March 2021
Encourage people to have their say through a framework of resident and stakeholder consultation methods including Borough Panel Tenants Panel Focus Groups Specialist Groups facilitated by the council, including the Disability Access Group	Up to March 2021
Engage with other organisations through a range of forums including Welwyn Hatfield Alliance and other strategic partnerships	Oct 2018
Participate in relevant groups which operate in the borough, specifically those which meet the needs of people with different protected characteristics.	Up to March 2021
Encourage discussion with groups representing the interests of the diverse communities and facilitate their work where practical.	Up to March 2021
Work with the Interfaith Group to encourage more schools to get involved with Holocaust Memorial day	March 2019