



## AGENDA

### COUNCIL MEETING

Date: Wednesday, 27 July 2016

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT

#### RECORDING NOTICE

Please note: this meeting may be recorded.

At the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being audio recorded. The whole of the meeting will be recorded, except where there are confidential or exempt items.

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Therefore by entering the Chamber and speaking at Committee you are consenting to being recorded and to the possible use of those sound records for training purposes. If you have any queries regarding this please contact Democratic Services.

Quorum = 16

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Pages

#### 1. Emergency Evacuation Procedure

The Chairman will advise the meeting of the evacuation procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. This is particularly important for visitors and members of the public who will be unfamiliar with the building and procedures.

The Chairman will inform the meeting whether there is a planned evacuation drill due to take place, what the alarm sounds like (i.e. ringing bells), where the closest emergency exit route is, and where the second closest emergency exit route is, in the event that the closest exit or route is blocked.

The Chairman will inform the meeting that:

(a) in the event of the alarm sounding, everybody must leave the building via the nearest safe available exit and gather at the Assembly points at the far side of the Car Park. Nobody must leave the assembly point until everybody can be accounted for and nobody must return to the building until the Chairman has informed them that it is safe to do so; and

(b) the lifts must not be used in the event of an evacuation.

Any officers present at the meeting will aid with the evacuation. It is important that the Chairman is informed of any person attending who is disabled or unable to use the stairs, so that suitable arrangements may be made in the event of an emergency.

2. Prayers
3. Apologies for Absence
4. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 June 2016 (Minute Nos. 743 - 755) as a correct record, subject to an amendment to Question Five of Minute No. 749 so that the last sentence reads: 'The Cabinet Member advised that, through the hard work of the Safeguarding Team, the levels of referrals were on an upward trend from 58 in the last quarter of **2015**, to 69 in the current quarter'.

5. Declarations of Interest

Councillors should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves or their spouse, civil partner or person with whom they are living with as a spouse or civil partner. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

The Chairman will ask Members if they have any interests to declare in respect of items on this agenda, under the following headings:

(a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) under the Localism Act 2011. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DPI, the Member must leave the meeting and not take part in the discussion or vote. This applies even if there is provision for public speaking.

(b) Disclosable Non Pecuniary (DNPI) under the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council in May 2012. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DNPI interest, the Member may stay, speak and vote on the matter.

(c) Where it is possible that a fair-minded and informed observer, having considered the facts would conclude that there was a real possibility that the Member might be predetermined or biased the Member should declare their predetermination or bias and then leave the room while that item is considered.

**Advice to Members:** If any Councillor has any doubt about the existence or nature of any DPI or DNPI which he/she may have in any item on this agenda, he/she should seek advice from the Director of Corporate Services as Monitoring Officer, the Head of Legal or from other Solicitors in Legal Services as early as possible, and in advance of the Meeting.

6. Mayor's Announcements

7. Questions submitted by the Public

To consider any questions submitted by the public. (The deadline for questions is 4.30 pm the Friday before the meeting – please contact Democratic Services by e-mailing [democraticservices@swale.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@swale.gov.uk) or call 01795 417330).

8. Questions submitted by Members

To consider any questions submitted by Members. (The deadline for questions is 4.30 pm the Wednesday before the meeting – please contact Democratic Services by e-mailing [democraticservices@swale.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@swale.gov.uk) or call 01795 417330).

9. Leader's Statement

Members may ask questions on the Leader's Statement. (To follow).

10. Swale Borough Council Corporate Equalities Scheme 2016 - 2020 1 - 46

11. Appointment to the Independent Remuneration Panel 47 - 50

12. Recommendations for Approval

Council is asked to note the recommendations from the Cabinet meeting held on 29 June 2016 regarding the Corporate Equalities Scheme 2016 – 2020.

13. Exclusion of the press and public

To decide whether to pass the resolution set out below in respect of the following item:

That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act: 1. Information relating to any individual.

14. Exempt appendix - Appointment to the Independent Remuneration Panel 51 - 52

## Issued on Monday, 18 July 2016

The reports included in Part I of this agenda can be made available in **alternative formats**. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, **please contact DEMOCRATIC SERVICES on 01795 417330**. To find out more about the work of Council, please visit [www.swale.gov.uk](http://www.swale.gov.uk)

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Council	Agenda Item:
<b>Meeting Date</b>	27 July 2016
<b>Report Title</b>	Corporate Equalities Scheme 2016-2020
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cllr Andrew Bowles, Leader
<b>SMT Lead</b>	Abdool Kara
<b>Head of Service</b>	David Clifford
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Bob Pullen
<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Classification</b>	Open
<b>Forward Plan</b>	<b>Reference number: 5</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	1. Cabinet is asked to approve the Corporate Equalities Scheme 2016-2020.

## 1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report invites Council to note the response to consultation on the draft Corporate Equalities Scheme 2016-2020, and to approve the final version for publication.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 Public authorities in England and Wales which were subject to the specific duties of the Equality Act 2010 had until 6 April 2012 to publish equality objectives. Swale BC went beyond these requirements by publishing a Corporate Equalities Scheme, containing equality objectives, in 2011 – a year ahead of schedule.

- 2.2 It is expected that authorities that are subject to the duties of the Equality Act 2010 will review and/or replace their equality objectives every four years. Therefore, our objectives come to the end of their life in March 2016.

- 2.3 Guidance to public authorities issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHCR) states:

*“Ideally, the development of equality objectives should be carried out as part of the normal business planning processes of your organisation. The flexibility to publish objectives any time up to 6 April 2012, and to set and publish new objectives at any point in the following four years, is intended to support this approach.”*

- 2.4 SMT agreed at their meeting on 20 November 2015 that the new Corporate Equality Scheme should be published by the end of July 2016, to enable a full public consultation period, including engagement with the various representative groups within Swale, and the necessary clearances through Cabinet and Council. Cabinet endorsed the scheme on 13 July.
- 2.5 This report seeks Council's approval of the Corporate Equalities Scheme for publication.

### **3 Proposals**

- 3.1 The General Equality Duty is set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In summary, those subject to the Act (including local authorities) must in the exercise of their functions, have regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
  - advance opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
  - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 3.2 The duty covers eight protected characteristics – age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. These are known as protected groups. The duty also covers marriage and civil partnership, but not for all aspects of the duty.
- 3.3 The specific duties require a public authority to publish specific items of information:
- evidence of analysis that they have undertaken to establish whether their policies or practices have (or would) further the aims of the general equality duty;
  - details of the information that they considered in carrying out this analysis;
  - details of engagement that they undertook with people who they considered to have an interest in furthering the aims of the general duty; and
  - prepare and publish equality objectives.
- 3.4 The Council has sought to meet these requirements by publishing a Corporate Equality Scheme which incorporates all of the elements of paragraph 3.3, and the Corporate Equality Scheme 2016-2020 at Appendix I continues this approach.
- 3.5 The Corporate Equalities Scheme 2016-2020 is different from the Council's previous schemes in that objectives and key actions focus more on Swale's communities and less on the Council's internal processes.

3.6 Council is asked to approve the scheme for publication.

## 4 Alternative Options

4.1 Not to publish a new Corporate Equalities Scheme, although this would run the risk of censure by the Equality and Human Rights Commission who have powers to serve public authorities with a Compliance Notice in the event of breaches of the general duty.

## 5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 SMT and the Policy Development and Review Committee have been involved in early discussions to help shape the new objectives for the period 2016-2020 and the resulting draft Scheme. The scheme was endorsed by Cabinet on 13 July.

5.2 A full public consultation on the draft Scheme was launched on 26 February until 29 April 2016. The consultation was publicised by way of a Press Release and promotion through the Swale Community Empowerment Network's newsletter, which is sent to just under 400 organisations and individuals across Swale.

5.3 Furthermore, all local organisations representing those with protected characteristics were sent a copy of the draft Scheme, along with a covering letter signed by the Portfolio Holder inviting them to meet and discuss the draft.

5.4 The Policy Development and Review Committee considered the draft Scheme at their meeting on 23 March 2016.

5.5 A schedule of comments received is at Appendix II.

## 6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The Corporate Equalities Scheme will support all three objectives in the Corporate Plan, and numerous cross-references to the Corporate Plan have been included in the text.
Financial, Resource and Property	There will be minimal financial implications for publishing a new Corporate Equalities Scheme. Staff and publication costs were planned for in the last Service Planning round. Delivery of the actions within the Scheme will be undertaken within existing resources.
Legal and Statutory	As a public authority, we are required by statute to publish equality objectives and associated information by the Equality Act 2010.
Crime and Disorder	None envisaged at this stage. Some of the key actions in the Scheme refer to existing activity being undertaken by the Swale Community Safety Partnership.

Sustainability	None.
Health and Wellbeing	None.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None.
Equality and Diversity	The entire draft Corporate Equality Scheme is concerned with the Council's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

## 7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Corporate Equality Scheme 2016-2020
- Appendix II: Responses to consultation on draft Corporate Equalities Scheme
- Appendix III: Progress made on Corporate Equality Scheme 2011-2015
- Appendix IV: Community Impact Assessment.

## 8 Background Papers

Swale Borough Council – Our Four Year Equality Scheme 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2015

[Report to Policy Development and Review Committee on draft Corporate Equality Scheme 2016-2020](#)

[Press release announcing launch of consultation on the draft Corporate Equality Scheme 2016 - 2020](#)

[Report to Cabinet – 13 July 2016](#)



# **Swale Borough Council**

## **Corporate Equality Scheme 2016 – 2020**

July 2016

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Appendix II: Swale Borough Council workforce – Equality and diversity key characteristics

## Foreword

We view equality, human rights and good relations between people as something that affects us all, regardless of our backgrounds, and we are committed to working closely with all those who are interested in, or affected by, our work. We see this as an ongoing process enabling individuals and organisations to influence and shape our work.

In developing the Council's Corporate Equality Scheme 2016-2020, we have carefully considered all of the evidence and data that is available to us. This is the third Scheme the Council has developed since 2007, and we have decided to publish comprehensive data on the key equality and diversity characteristics of the Borough of Swale and of our residents.

The purpose of the Scheme is to describe how Swale Borough Council will fulfil its moral, social and legal obligations to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations.

Swale Borough Council's overarching purpose is making Swale a better place. We have put in place a three year Corporate Plan with three priorities:

- A Borough to be proud of – focussing on the Council's aspirations for Swale as a physical place;
- A Community to be proud of – focussing on the Council's aspirations for the people of Swale; and
- A Council to be proud of – focussing on the Council's need to develop its own organisational capacity and culture as it continually re-assesses how it can best achieve the objectives of the other two priority themes.

The Corporate Plan and priorities are further underpinned by our core values:

- **Fairness** - being objective to balance the needs of all those in our community;
- **Integrity** - being open, honest and taking responsibility;
- **Respect** - embracing and valuing the diversity of others;
- **Service** - delivering high quality, cost effective public service; and
- **Trust** - delivering on our promises to each other, customers and our partners.

We have tried through this Scheme to focus more on what is important to Swale's community than on internal Council processes, although these are still important as reflected in the Scheme's objectives.

Our first equality objective – Supporting integration and cohesion in our local communities – is designed to foster good relations between different groups. The second equality objective – Supporting our vulnerable residents – is about supporting Swale's more vulnerable residents, particularly those with a disability.

Taken together, these objectives are designed to underpin the first two objectives of our Corporate Plan.

The third equality objective – Ensuring easy, clear and convenient access to our services – is about improving our customer care and working with our communities to make our services more responsive to the needs of Swale’s residents. The fourth equality objective – Promoting equality as a local employer – is about ensuring that those policies and practices that affect our staff are fair and promote equality of outcome.

Taken together, these objectives are designed to underpin the third objective of our Corporate Plan.

Looking ahead, this equality scheme sets out how our aims to make Swale a fairer place. The Borough of Swale is becoming an increasingly diverse place, and as a Council we need to tailor our services to meet those changing needs whilst providing value for money for local residents.

We also need to take a leading role in making Swale a place where everyone has equal life chances – regardless of age, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender, marital status, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity leave rights.

Councillor Andrew Bowles  
Leader of the Council

## Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty which applies to all public bodies and any private and voluntary bodies carrying out public functions. The Duty places a legal requirement on Swale Borough Council in carrying out its functions to have regard for the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and
- foster good relations between different groups.

The Duty covers people with the following protected characteristics:

- age;
- race;
- disability;
- sexual orientation;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- gender reassignment; and
- pregnancy and maternity.

The eliminating discrimination aim also covers marriage and civil partnership.

Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and persons who do not, includes:

- removing or minimising disadvantage suffered by people who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; and
- encouraging persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such a person is disproportionately low.

Fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not includes tackling prejudice, promoting understanding, and may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.

Our four year equality scheme sets out how we will meet these legal requirements.

Swale Borough Council views equality, human rights and good relations between people as something that affects us all, regardless of our backgrounds, and we are committed to working closely with all those who are interested in, or affected by, our work. We see this as an ongoing process enabling individuals and organisations to influence and shape our work.

## The scheme

This four year equality scheme covers the period July 2016 to July 2020, is closely linked to our Corporate Plan<sup>1</sup> and describes how Swale Borough Council will fulfil its moral, social and legal obligations to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations.

## Council Services

Swale Borough Council is one of 12 districts, which together with Kent County Council and Medway Unitary Authority comprise the local authorities within Kent. Local authorities are created by Acts of Parliament and their powers are determined by Parliament.

Councils provide three types of service to their communities:

- **statutory services** – these are services that councils must provide as set out in legislation such as refuse collection;
- **regulatory services** – this is the name given to a group of services which exist to ensure public, consumer, environmental and worker protection and includes services such as development control and licensing; and
- **discretionary services** – these are services that councils may choose to provide such as leisure and tourism.

## Profile of Swale Borough Council

The Council is made up of 47 elected councillors, who represent 24 wards. The last local elections were held on 7 May 2015 and coincided with the UK Parliamentary elections. The current political balance on the Council is Conservative 32 seats, United Kingdom Independence Party nine seats, Labour four seats, and Independent Group two seats. As a result, the Conservative Party form the Administration of the Council, and are likely to through to the next local government elections in 2019.

The whole council comes together to decide on the most important issues, but day-to-day political leadership is undertaken by a smaller group of councillors known as the Cabinet.

Councillors have an important role to play in representing the interests of their wards, scrutinising the Cabinet's decisions, and contributing to the development of policy.

With an annual gross expenditure of £26.8 million of public money, we need to be absolutely sure that the money we spend is going to achieve the maximum possible benefit for the Borough. To help us do this, we have set ourselves three priorities which were developed to ensure that we focussed on what really matters to local people.

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<sup>1</sup> Swale Borough Council: Make Swale a better place – Corporate Plan 2015-2018

Following a thorough analysis of all the relevant evidence available, including what our residents told us was important to them, we set the following Priority Themes and Objectives in our Corporate Plan for the period 2015-2018:

<b>Priority Theme 1: A Borough To Be Proud Of</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	
1.1	Deliver major regeneration projects
1.2	Enhance the Borough's economic and tourism offer
1.3	Keep Swale clean and tidy
1.4	Protect and improve the natural and built environments
1.5	Lobby for better roads and transport
<b>Priority Theme 2: A Community To Be Proud Of</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	
2.1	Foster economic growth and prosperity for all
2.2	Encourage active communities and support the voluntary sector
2.3	Reduce crime and disorder
2.4	Use our influence to ensure local skills are matched to local jobs
2.5	Work collaboratively to improve health and mental health
<b>Priority Theme 3: A Council To Be Proud Of</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	
3.1	Improve residents' perceptions and customers' experiences
3.2	Ensure that Swale's internal governance and decision-making are second to none
3.3	Encourage innovation at every level
3.4	Strengthen our financial and political resilience
3.5	Enhance our capacity for achieving outcomes collaboratively

### **Profile of Swale**

The Borough of Swale enjoys a great location on the North Kent coast, within easy reach of London but set in rolling Kentish countryside, less than 30 miles from the Channel Tunnel. With an area of 140 square miles and a population of 140,800, Swale includes the towns of Sittingbourne and Faversham, the Isle of Sheppey, and an extensive rural hinterland. The Borough is proud of the quality of its natural environment, and contains a large number of protected sites of scientific interest and outstanding natural beauty.

Much of the Borough's traditional employment has been low-skilled, which has left a legacy in some areas of low ambitions and relatively high deprivation. Swale has a growing population, with increasing demand for new homes, jobs and services, which needs to be managed in a fair and sustainable way. Along with many of our partners, this is a key role for the Borough Council.

### **Our evidence base**

In developing our equality scheme we have gathered evidence from a number of sources to determine the key characteristics of our equality and diversity if Swale's population. The key evidence has been drawn from the following sources:

- Kent County Council Business Intelligence Statistical Bulletins:
  - [2011 Census: Cultural diversity in Kent – January 2013](#)
  - [2014 Mid-Year Population Estimates: Age and gender profile – July 2015](#)
  - [Disability in Kent – September 2015](#).
- Office for National Statistics:
  - Marital and Civil Partnership Status, local authorities in England and Wales – December 2012
- Department for Work and Pensions:
  - NOMIS – labour market statistics.
- Local Area Perception Survey:
  - an annual postal survey on behalf of the council to provide a statistically robust way of assessing Swale residents' views and priorities.

Unless otherwise stated, the data for Kent incorporates the twelve district councils of Kent but excludes Medway which is a unitary authority. Data for the South East and England does incorporate Medway.

The detailed data which has informed this strategy can be found in Appendix I.



## **Our Equality Priorities**

We have identified the following four key priorities for our equality scheme:

- Equality Objective One: Supporting integration and cohesion in our local communities
- Equality Objective Two: Supporting our vulnerable residents
- Equality Objective Three: Ensuring easy, clear and convenient access to our services
- Equality Objective Four: Promoting equality as a local employer

## **Equality Objective 1: Supporting integration and cohesion in our local communities**

This objective is about fostering good relations between different groups.

### **Background**

Through our annual residents survey, over three-quarters of people in Swale have told us that they are generally satisfied with their local area as a place to live. However, only two thirds of those surveyed believed that Swale is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.

Swale has a growing population<sup>2</sup> with more and more people coming to live here from other areas of the UK. The data also shows that people of other ethnic backgrounds, including Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) people and people from the European Union Accession States<sup>3</sup>, are part of this population growth.

As a council, we need to ensure that all communities feel safe, have equal access to our services, and that our services are designed to avoid any discrimination on people with a protected characteristic. Furthermore, we want to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding. This is best served by incorporating a specific equality objective aimed at tackling these issues.

### **Key actions**

We will aim to achieve this objective over the next four years by:

- fulfilling our community leadership role;
- consulting, involving and engaging representative networks covering all equality areas to help inform our future activities;
- continuing to tackle crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour through the Swale Community Safety Partnership including ongoing work to tackle the PREVENT agenda;
- continuing to promote and support the Swale Youth Forum;
- ensuring effective implementation of the Troubled Families programme;
- continuing to encourage the number of people giving their time to help others in Swale by supporting the voluntary and community sector;
- continuing to work closely with Swale's parish and town councils;
- continuing to support and actively promote community-led initiatives (eg. Neighbourhood Planning) which encourage communities themselves to work together to solve issues locally;
- continuing to use the local Health and Wellbeing Board to influence the local health and public health agendas; and

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix I for detailed information

<sup>3</sup> From 2001 Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Malta, Slovakia and Slovenia and from 2007 Bulgaria and Romania

- continuing to enable healthier lifestyles and physical activity through the implementation of the Sport and Physical Activity Framework for Swale and the Indoor Sports Strategy 2015-25.

## **Equality objective 2: Supporting our vulnerable residents**

This objective is about supporting Swale's more vulnerable residents, particularly those with a disability.

### **Background**

A major area where Swale's equality and diversity profile is different is disability. There is no single measure of the number of people with a disability. The definitions of disability vary and often rely on an individual's perception of their own health; a condition that one person considers disabling is not necessarily considered in the same way by another with the same condition.

At the time of the 2011 Census, Swale was among the highest district in Kent where people live with a long term health problem or disability. Swale is above the average for all Kent districts in this respect, and higher than the average for the South East and England and Wales.

Variations in lifestyle choices and in access to opportunities to improve health mean that average life expectancy is up to ten years lower in the Borough's worst-off neighbourhoods than in its more affluent.

As a result of Swale having a higher percentage of residents either with a long term health problem or disability, and more claiming disability benefits than the average for Kent, South East and national averages, we have decided to set a specific equality objective to support this section of our population.

### **Key actions**

We will aim to achieve this objective over the next four years by:

- continuing to support Swale's elderly and vulnerable residents through programmes such as the Staying Put service;
- supporting partners to improve health and reduce hospital admissions through effective home adaptations and by improving conditions in privately rented homes;
- supporting households with the greatest housing needs to access affordable housing;
- providing assistance to households where no one living at the property is able to physically move their refuse or recycling to the boundary for collection; and
- through the work of the Community Safety Partnership seek to identify and support vulnerable victims of crime and anti-social behaviour, focusing on those issues and vulnerable groups as identified in the annual Community Safety Strategic Assessment.

### **Equality objective 3: Ensuring easy, clear and convenient access to our services**

This objective is about improving our customer care and working with our communities to make our services more responsive to the needs of all of Swale's residents.

#### **Background**

The provision of excellent customer care is very important to Swale Borough Council and something that we are working to improve further. One of our priority themes, stated in our Corporate Plan, is "a Council to be proud of" and this describes our focus in terms of our approach to customer contact and the provision of consistently high standards of customer service.

We will continue to provide a choice of access to our services through a balance of cost-effective and convenient options, and pursue initiatives to improve customer service at reduced cost, including self-service options where appropriate. For many years we have offered to provide Council documents in alternative formats and, for example, our Staying Put Team provide leaflets in large print as a matter of course as the primary audience for the services they offer are generally elderly and vulnerable.

Although our equality and diversity profile is broadly similar to other local authorities in Kent and the South East, we recognise that a 'one size fits all' approach to service delivery is not the right approach. Therefore, when designing services we will focus on the diverse needs of Swale residents by consulting service users and through the use of tools such as Community Impact Assessments.

#### **Key actions**

We will aim to achieve this objective over the next four years by:

- providing a choice of access to our services through a balance of cost-effective and convenient options, and pursue initiatives to improve customer service at reduced cost (eg. face-to-face, electronic, phone or written letter depending on customer need);
- delivering high levels of customer satisfaction with our services;
- treating all of our customers with respect by being polite, welcoming and courteous;
- continuing to improve accessibility of our working practices and buildings;
- providing Council documents in alternatives formats, i.e. large print, audio, different language;
- consulting on the webcasting of Council meetings;
- retaining the industry-standard accreditation Customer Service Excellence for a range of our services;

- promoting opportunities to bid for Council contracts among local voluntary/ community organisations, and using social value criteria when assessing tenders to ensure fair competition;
- maintain our procurement framework to continue to ensure that suppliers can demonstrate fairly their commitment to equality; and
- endeavour to have greater consideration of cultural diversity when commissioning new services.

## **Equality objective 4: Promoting equality as a local employer**

This objective is about ensuring that those policies and practices that affect our staff are fair and promote equality of outcome.

### **Background**

Members of staff have rights in their capacity as employees. We want to enable all our staff to be fully involved in the Council's work, to protect them from unfair treatment, to uphold our obligations to provide job descriptions, work plans, appraisals and related performance and monitoring systems, and to give the support, development opportunities and training.

To inform our key actions we have gathered evidence from our equality monitoring data, equality impact assessments, and consultation with staff, including our staff survey. The key equality and diversity characteristics for Swale Borough Council employees are at Appendix II.

### **Key actions**

We will aim to achieve this objective over the next four years by:

- promoting a workplace environment where all of our staff are treated with dignity and respect;
- encouraging the diversity of our staff to reflect the communities we serve across all the equality characteristics, and will continue to monitor our workforce profile;
- adopting non-discriminatory practices;
- retaining industry-standard accreditations such as Investors in People; and
- continuing to provide our staff and councillors with relevant on-going training and development on equality and diversity issues.

## **Community Impact Assessments**

A Community Impact Assessment (CIA) is a document that summarises how the Council has had due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty in decision-making.

The Council undertakes CIAs whenever it is changing, removing or introducing a new service, policy or function.

## **Responsibility and Accountability**

The Council is ultimately responsible for delivering the General and Specific Duties set out in the Equality Scheme.

Our Chief Executive has overall accountability for making sure that we carry out the actions in this scheme. However, actions have been allocated to the relevant Directors and Heads of Service across the council, and they are responsible for carrying these out and reporting on progress.

The Scheme will be monitored, and regular progress reports will be made to the Strategic Management Team.

## **Publication**

This 2016-2020 scheme will be available on our website. A summary of this document will be made available in alternative formats on request.

## **How to give us feedback about the Scheme**

We welcome feedback on any aspect of our Equality Scheme and more generally on our approach to equality and inclusion. You can contact us at [policyteam@swale.gov.uk](mailto:policyteam@swale.gov.uk)

At Swale Borough Council we value what our customers think about us. We would therefore be very grateful if you would provide us with feedback about our services and in fact anything relating to the Council be it good or bad.

Members of the public who feel that they have experienced unlawful discrimination in the way they have been treated by the council may make a complaint through the corporate complaints procedure. The Council promises to take all complaints seriously, and will not accept discrimination of any kind. The Council will also monitor complaints to see whether we are meeting our equality duties.

The Members' Code of Conduct deals with complaints about the conduct of elected Members. Members who experience unlawful discrimination can alert the council through the grievance procedure.

If you believe the Council has not delivered its services to your satisfaction and would like to complain, there is a four step complaints process which is free to use and details can be found on the website at: <http://www.swale.gov.uk/compliments-and-complaints/>



## Swale – Equality and diversity key characteristics

<b>AGE AND GENDER<sup>4</sup></b>
<p><b>Key observations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The 45-49 age group is the highest proportion of Swale’s population (7.5%)</li> <li>▪ The 90+ age group is the smallest proportion of the population (0.7%)</li> <li>▪ 50.6% of the population in Swale are female and 49.4% are male</li> </ul>

The source of data for these observations is Kent County Council’s Business Intelligence Statistical Bulletin: 2014 Mid-Year Population Estimates – Age and gender profile: July 2015. This is in turn based on information published by the Office for National Statistics compiled from the 2011 Census.

### Total population

Swale is the third most populous district in Kent. Swale’s population has been growing for over 20 years as a result of migration (i.e. more people entering the borough than leaving it), coupled with an increase in natural change (i.e. increased life expectancy with less people dying and an increase in the number of births). Swale is no different from most other Kent districts in this respect.

	<b>Swale</b>		<b>Kent districts</b>	
<b>Population</b>	140,800		1,510,400	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
<b>Number</b>	69,600	71,200	740,100	770,300
<b>Percentage</b>	49.4%	50.6%	49.0%	51.0%

### Population growth

In the early 1990s, all areas of Kent including Swale experienced net outward migration (i.e. more people were leaving the county than entering it), and so all population growth was attributed to positive natural change (i.e. more births than deaths). From mid-1993 onwards, Swale<sup>5</sup> and the other Kent districts began to experience net inward migration (more people entering the county than leaving), and the rate of this net migration has been the predominant factor in Swale’s population growth ever since.

<b>Swale population growth since 1994</b>	
1994	116,800
2004	125,900
2014	140,800

<sup>4</sup>2014 mid-year population estimates – ONS, 25/06/15

<sup>5</sup> Kent County Council interactive populations estimates toolkit

## Mean age

There are more females than males in Swale, but this pattern is seen across Kent. Swale has the least percentage difference between females and males in Kent. Similarly, the male/female ratio changes with age. On the whole, there are more males compared with females in the younger age groups, but as age increases there become more females to males.

	Swale			Kent districts		
	Total persons	Males	Females	Total persons	Males	Females
<b>Mean age</b>	40.1	39.2	41.0	40.7	39.6	41.7

## Swale 2014 Mid-year Population Estimates by five-year Group and Gender

	Total persons		Males		Females	
	No.	% of total population	No.	%	No.	%
<b>All ages</b>	140,800	-	69,600	49.4%	71,200	50.6%
<b>0-4</b>	9,200	6.5%	4,700	51.8%	4,400	48.2%
<b>5-9</b>	8,900	6.3%	4,600	51.8%	4,300	48.2%
<b>10-14</b>	8,200	5.8%	4,200	51.1%	4,000	48.9%
<b>15-19</b>	8,900	6.3%	4,600	51.1%	4,400	48.9%
<b>20-24</b>	8,000	5.7%	4,300	53.1%	3,800	46.9%
<b>25-29</b>	8,200	5.8%	4,000	49.2%	4,200	50.8%
<b>30-34</b>	8,500	6.1%	4,100	48.1%	4,400	51.9%
<b>35-39</b>	7,900	5.6%	3,800	48.2%	4,100	51.8%
<b>40-44</b>	9,400	6.6%	4,600	49.1%	4,800	50.9%
<b>45-49</b>	10,600	7.5%	5,200	49.2%	5,400	50.8%
<b>50-54</b>	10,100	7.2%	5,100	50.0%	5,100	50.0%
<b>55-59</b>	8,700	6.2%	4,500	51.1%	4,300	48.9%
<b>60-64</b>	8,100	5.8%	4,000	49.7%	4,100	50.3%
<b>65-69</b>	9,000	6.4%	4,400	48.7%	4,600	51.3%
<b>70-74</b>	6,200	4.4%	3,000	48.5%	3,200	51.5%
<b>75-79</b>	4,700	3.4%	2,200	47.4%	2,500	52.6%
<b>80-84</b>	3,200	2.3%	1,300	41.7%	1,900	58.3%
<b>85-89</b>	1,900	1.4%	700	37.9%	1,200	62.1%
<b>90+</b>	1,100	0.7%	300	25.4%	800	73.6%

**Kent districts 2014 Mid-year Population Estimates by five-year Group and Gender**

	Total persons		Males		Females	
	No.	% of total population	No.	%	No.	%
<b>All ages</b>	1,510,400	-	740,100	49.0%	770,300	51.0%
<b>0-4</b>	91,700	6.1%	47,100	51.4%	44,600	48.6%
<b>5-9</b>	91,800	6.1%	47,200	51.4%	44,600	48.6%
<b>10-14</b>	87,100	5.8%	44,600	51.2%	42,500	48.8%
<b>15-19</b>	94,900	6.3%	48,500	51.1%	46,400	48.9%
<b>20-24</b>	92,900	6.2%	47,100	50.7%	45,800	49.3%
<b>25-29</b>	87,400	5.8%	43,800	50.2%	43,600	49.8%
<b>30-34</b>	87,300	5.8%	41,900	48.1%	45,300	51.9%
<b>35-39</b>	85,700	5.7%	41,700	48.7%	44,000	51.3%
<b>40-44</b>	102,100	6.8%	49,800	48.8%	52,200	51.2%
<b>45-49</b>	112,800	7.5%	55,800	49.5%	57,000	50.5%
<b>50-54</b>	105,500	7.0%	52,500	49.7%	53,000	50.3%
<b>55-59</b>	91,300	6.0%	45,200	49.4%	46,200	50.6%
<b>60-64</b>	85,500	5.7%	41,700	48.8%	43,700	51.2%
<b>65-69</b>	93,900	6.2%	45,500	48.5%	48,400	51.5%
<b>70-74</b>	67,200	4.5%	32,100	47.7%	35,200	52.3%
<b>75-79</b>	53,400	3.5%	24,700	46.3%	28,700	53.7%
<b>80-84</b>	40,000	2.6%	17,000	42.7%	22,900	57.3%
<b>85-89</b>	25,000	1.7%	9,500	37.8%	15,500	62.2%
<b>90+</b>	15,000	1.0%	4,200	28.3%	10,800	71.7%

## Ethnicity

### Key observations

- The white ethnic group is the largest group within Swale (96.6%)
- Of these, 92.9% are White English, Welsh, Scottish or Northern Irish; 0.6% are Irish, 0.5% are Gypsy or Irish Traveller; and 2.6% are from other white ethnic groups
- Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) residents account for 3.4% of Swale residents, and the Borough has the second lowest number and proportion of residents from a BME group in Kent
- BME groups in Swale consist of mixed/ multiple ethnic groups (1.2%), Asian/ British Asian (1.2%), Black/African/Caribbean/Black British (1%); and other ethnic groups (0.1%)

The source for these observations is Kent County Council's Business Intelligence Statistical Bulletin, Census 2011: Cultural Diversity in Kent – January 2013, and the Office for National Statistics 2014 Mid-Year Populations Estimates.

Swale's population is overwhelmingly white British, more so than other Kent districts. Although it is not possible to separate out how many people born in the EU Accession States live in Swale from those born in other countries of the world, taken together these groups increased by 12 percent between the 2001 and 2011 censuses, representing the largest annual rate of change for any ethnicity during that period.

The largest Black and Minority Ethnic group are Black Africans, making them the largest ethnic group in Swale. The next largest ethnic group are Gypsy and Irish Travellers.

Swale has the largest proportion of population born in England in Kent, and has 97 per cent of households where all occupants have English as their main language. This too is the highest proportion of all local authority areas in Kent, and is significantly higher than the regional and national averages.

Since 1991, Swale's Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) population has increased by 301 percent, which is of a similar order to that of Kent County (275 percent) and the wider south east (269 percent), although all these figures are significantly above the rate for England of 166 percent. Despite this apparently large percentage increase, at 3.4% Swale still has a relatively small proportion of BME residents compared with the national average, and the second lowest number and proportion of BME residents in Kent.

As a result of changes to questions which have been included in each Census since 1991, it is not possible to give an accurate and comparable time series of whether the various groups within this broad ethnic category have increased or decreased in numbers over the years.

<b>Swale BME population 1991 to 2011<sup>6</sup></b>	
1991	1,166
2001	2,285
2011	4,680

The other ethnic group which is growing in Swale is the number of people from countries that joined the European Union (EU) in 2004 (i.e. the Accession States - Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, plus Bulgaria and Romania who joined in 2007).

Of those Kent residents who were born in the EU, the majority (25,872 people or 1.8 percent) were born in countries which were part of the EU after April 2001. 20,778 people, or 1.4 percent, were born in countries which were part of the EU before April 2001. 5.4 percent of Kent residents were born in countries outside of the UK and the EU. This is considerably lower than the national figure of 9.4 percent for England, or the regional figure of 7.7 percent for the South East.

Swale's average annual rate of change in the number of residents who were not born in the UK or in any of the EU states which were part of the EU before 2004-07 was 12 percent between 2001 and 2011, slightly higher than the equivalent figure for Kent as a whole (11 percent), and half as much again than the figure for England (8 percent).

Swale's 2015 Local Area Perception Survey showed that 66 percent of those surveyed believed that the local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. This is unchanged from the previous survey undertaken in 2014, but the results of both the 2014 and 2015 surveys showed a statistically significant improvement in this area compared with previous years.

The Local Area Perception Survey results also show that the proportion of residents who have given unpaid help to a club, society or organisation at least once a month in the past year has risen.

With the exception of disabled people (see Objective 2), Swale has a similar equality and diversity profile to other Kent districts in respect of the other protected characteristics of age and gender, religion or belief, and marital status.

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<sup>6</sup> Kent County Council Business Intelligence Statistical Bulletin – 2011 Census: Cultural diversity in Kent

**Percentage of population by detailed ethnic category in Kent districts, the South East and England – Census 2011**

	<b>Swale</b>	<b>Kent districts</b>	<b>South East</b>	<b>England</b>
<b>White</b>				
English/Welsh/Scottish/ Northern Irish/British	92.9%	89.1%	85.2%	79.8%
Irish	0.6%	0.7%	0.9%	1.0%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.5%	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%
Other white	2.6%	3.6%	4.4%	4.6%
<b>Mixed/multiple ethnic groups</b>				
White and black Caribbean	0.4%	0.4%	0.5%	0.8%
White and black African	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%
White and Asian	0.3%	0.5%	0.7%	0.6%
Other mixed	0.3%	0.4%	0.5%	0.5%
<b>Asian/Asian British</b>				
Indian	0.4%	1.2%	1.8%	2.6%
Pakistani	0.1%	0.2%	1.1%	2.1%
Bangladeshi	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.8%
Chinese	0.2%	0.4%	0.6%	0.7%
Other Asian	0.3%	1.2%	1.4%	1.5%
<b>Black/African/Caribbean/ Black British</b>				
African	0.7%	0.8%	1.0%	1.8%
Caribbean	0.2%	0.2%	0.4%	1.1%
Other black	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.5%
<b>Other ethnic group</b>				
Arab	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.4%
Any other ethnic group	0.1%	0.4%	0.4%	0.6%

**Percentage of population by country of birth in Kent districts, the South East and England – Census 2011**

	<b>Swale</b>	<b>Kent districts</b>	<b>South East</b>	<b>England</b>
England	92.5%	88.6%	84.4%	83.5%
Northern Ireland	0.3%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
Scotland	0.9%	1.2%	1.6%	1.3%
Wales	0.6%	0.7%	1.1%	1.0%
Republic of Ireland	0.5%	0.6%	0.7%	0.7%
Other EU: Member countries in March 2011	0.9%	1.4%	1.9%	1.7%
Other EU: Accession countries April 2001 to March 2011	1.6%	1.8%	1.8%	2.0%
Other countries	2.8%	5.4%	7.7%	9.4%

**2001 to 2011 percentage annual rate of change in country of birth of residents in Kent districts, the South East and England – Census 2011**

	<b>Swale</b>	<b>Kent districts</b>	<b>South East</b>	<b>England</b>
England	0.9%	0.7%	0.4%	0.3%
Northern Ireland	-0.1%	-0.3%	-0.6%	-0.4%
Scotland	-1.3%	-0.9%	-1.2%	-1.1%
Wales	-2.8%	-2.1%	-1.8%	-1.7%
Republic of Ireland	0.1%	-0.2%	-0.8%	-1.4%
Other EU: Member countries in March 2001	0.8%	1.4%	1.3%	2.9%
Other countries (includes EU Accession countries, plus the rest of the world)	12.0%	10.9%	8.5%	7.8%

**Proportion of households by main language in Kent local authority districts, Kent, the South East and England – Census 2011**

	<b>Swale</b>	<b>Kent districts</b>	<b>South East</b>	<b>England</b>
All people aged 16 and over in household have English as a main language	97.0%	94.4%	93.2%	90.9%
At least one but not all people aged 16 and over in household have English as a main language	1.4%	2.3%	3.2%	3.9%
No people aged 16 and over in household but at least one person aged 3 to 15 has English as a main language	0.2%	0.4%	0.5%	0.8%
No people in household have English as a main language	1.4%	2.5%	3.1%	4.4%

## DISABILITY

### Key observations

- 18.6% of residents in Swale have a limiting long term illness - this is above the Kent average (17.6%), the South East (15.7%), and England and Wales (17.9%) averages
- 9.0% of people claim a disability related benefit in Swale - this is above the Kent (7.6%), South East (6.4%), and England and Wales (8.0%) averages

The sources for these observations are Kent County Council's Business Intelligence Statistical Bulletin, Disability in Kent – September 2015, and the Department for Work and Pensions Disability Benefit Claimant data – February 2015.

There is no single measure of the number of people with a disability. The definitions of disability vary and often rely on an individual's perception of their own health. The data provided here relates to the number of people with a disability or a disabling condition.

At the time of the 2011 Census, Swale was the fourth highest district in Kent for having the most people with a long term health problem or disability. Swale is a percentage point above the average for all Kent districts in this respect, and higher than the average for the South East and England and Wales.

The percentage of people aged over 50 with a long term health problem or disability varies across the Borough, with 23.4% in West Downs ward rising to 44.4% in Sheerness ward on the Isle of Sheppey.

The percentage of people in Swale claiming a disability benefit as at February 2015 equates to 12,629 claimants. The percentage is above the Kent, South East and England and Wales averages, and the fourth highest of the Kent districts.

### People with a long term health problem or disability<sup>7</sup>

	Swale	Kent districts	South East	England and Wales
<b>Total</b>	135,835	1,463,730	8,634,750	56,075,912
<b>% of all people with long-term health problem or disability</b>	18.6%	17.6%	15.7%	17.9%
<b>% of all people without long-term health problem or disability</b>	81.4%	82.4%	84.3%	82.1%

<sup>7</sup> 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics



## People aged 50+ with a long term health problem or disability – by ward<sup>8</sup>

Ward	No people with long term health problems or disability aged 50+	% of ward population aged 50+ <sup>9</sup>
Abbey*	750	36.0%
Bobbing, Iwade and Lower Halstow	407	26.0%
Borden and Grove Park	761	28.3%
Boughton and Courtenay	669	26.6%
Chalkwell	373	36.9%
East Downs	351	27.4%
Hartlip, Newington and Upchurch	737	29.2%
Homewood	735	32.3%
Kemsley	450	27.6%
Milton Regis	693	32.6%
Minster Cliffs	1,340	35.9%
Murston	589	32.3%
Priory	375	33.7%
Queenborough and Halfway	1,136	37.2%
Roman	915	40.4%
St Ann's	665	31.9%
Sheerness	1,633	44.4%
Sheppey Central	988	35.5%
Sheppey East	965	37.8%
Teynham and Lynsted	707	31.0%
The Meads	120	23.5%
Watling	778	33.3%
West Downs	309	23.4%
Woodstock	646	24.3%

## Total disability benefits claimants, February 2015<sup>10</sup>

	Swale	Kent districts	South East	England and Wales
% of total population	9.0%	7.6%	6.4%	8.0%

<sup>8</sup> KCC Ward Profiles - Swale

<sup>9</sup> Please note that the numbers and percentage for any given ward can be skewed by the number of care and retirement homes located within that ward, for example, Abbey Ward.

<sup>10</sup> NOMIS – Department for Work and Pensions

## Religion or belief

### Key observations

- In Swale, the highest proportion of people (63%) state their religion as Christianity
- A higher proportion of people in Swale say they are Christian or have no religion than the average for Kent
- After no religion (28.8%), a greater proportion of people in Swale state they are Muslims (0.6%) than any other religion, although this figure is lower than the average for Kent (1%), the South East (2.3%), and England and Wales (5%)

The source for these observations is Kent County Council's Business Intelligence Statistical Bulletin, Census 2011: Cultural Diversity in Kent – January 2013.

In 2011, Christianity remains the largest religion in Swale, and this is a similar picture to the average for Kent, the South East, and England and Wales. There are significantly fewer people in Swale who stated their religion as Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh or other non-Christian religion than in the South East region or England and Wales.

### Religion in Swale, Kent districts, South East and England – Census 2011

	Swale	Kent districts	South East	England and Wales
<b>Christian</b>	63.0%	62.5%	59.8%	59.4%
<b>Buddhist</b>	0.2%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
<b>Hindu</b>	0.3%	0.7%	1.1%	1.5%
<b>Jewish</b>	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.5%
<b>Muslim</b>	0.6%	1.0%	2.3%	5.0%
<b>Sikh</b>	0.1%	0.7%	0.6%	0.8%
<b>Other religion</b>	0.4%	0.4%	0.5%	0.4%
<b>No religion</b>	28.8%	26.8%	27.2%	24.7%
<b>Religion not stated</b>	6.6%	7.3%	7.4%	7.2%

## Marriage and civil partnerships

### Key observations

- 31.1% of residents in Swale are single
- 48.3% of residents are married
- 10% of Swale residents are divorced
- 7% are widowed
- 3.2% are separated
- 0.2% are in a registered same sex partnership.

The source for these observations are the 2011 Census: Key Statistics for local authorities, published in December 2012 by the Office for National Statistics.

There is no data available on the number of people in Swale whose sexual orientation is to their own sex, to the opposite sex, or to both sexes. Similarly there is no data available on the number of people in Swale who are going through or have gone through gender reassignment.

However, the 2011 Census gathered information for the first time on Civil Partnerships, and this showed that 197 people stated in the Census that they were in a Civil Partnership, which equates to 0.2% of Swale's adult population.

Swale has a similar profile to Kent, the South East and nationally in terms of marital and civil partnership status.

### Marital and civil partnership status – Census 2011

	Swale	Kent districts	South East	England
<b>Single</b>	31.1%	31.3%	31.9%	34.6%
<b>Married</b>	48.3%	48.8%	49.3%	46.6%
<b>In a registered same sex partnership</b>	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
<b>Separated</b>	3.2%	2.8%	2.5%	2.5%
<b>Divorced</b>	10.0%	9.6%	9.1%	9.0%
<b>Widowed</b>	7.0%	7.3%	6.9%	6.9%

### Swale Borough Council workforce – Equality and diversity key characteristics<sup>11</sup>

- 71 per cent of the Swale Borough Council workforce are female, much higher than the proportion of economically active women in the Swale workforce as a whole which is around 46 per cent.
- 4.6 per cent of our workforce describe themselves as having a disability, compared with 8 per cent of the economically active Swale population who describe themselves as having a disability.
- 1.8 per cent of our workforce are from black and minority ethnic groups compared with 3.1 per cent of the economically active Swale population from black and minority ethnic groups.
- Just over 30 per cent of staff are aged 20 to 39, with 2.5 per cent aged 16 to 19 and the remainder (just over two thirds) aged 40 or above. 8.6 per cent of staff are over 60.
- A third of staff did not wish to give details of their sexual orientation, but 63.8 per cent stated that they were heterosexual, 0.9% as gay or lesbian, and 0.3 per cent as bisexual.
- Just under a third of staff did not wish to give details of their religion or belief. 40.6 per cent of staff gave their religion as Christian, 24.5% stated they had no religion or belief, 0.6% stated they were Muslim, 0.3% stated they were Sikh, and 1.2% stated their religion or belief was not any of these, nor Buddhist, Hindu or Jewish.

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<sup>11</sup> Swale Borough Council People Performance Management report: 1 January 2016 and NOMIS datasets, Office for National Statistics

## Responses to consultation on draft Corporate Equalities Scheme 2016 - 2020

Organisation	Comment(s)	Proposed action
Liz Haggart, Chief Officer, Age UK Sheppey	<p>Thank you and Cllr Wilcox for coming to Sheerness today. As requested please find attached a copy of the data we talked about. You asked for some comments in writing.</p> <p>Looking at the data for people with disabilities at ward level shows quite starkly the acute levels of disability on the Isle of Sheppey and in particular amongst older people. I believe that the number of older people on Sheppey represents almost one half of older people with disabilities in Swale. As I mentioned to you, according to DWP data in 2014 about 70% of older people in Sheerness East and West were claiming some form of disability benefit and 46% in Leysdown and Warden. These are very high levels relative to the County average. The level of disadvantage on Sheppey is the key factor in the Borough's relatively high level as a whole so I would therefore suggest that your strategy looks to see if these areas of acute disadvantage can be acknowledged. I also hope that this can be reflected in your proposed actions.</p> <p>I hope this is helpful. If you require any further input from me please do not hesitate to ask.</p>	<p>Agreed. A reference has been included in the background section of Objective 2, and a table has been added to Appendix I of the Scheme showing the proportion of residents aged over 50 in each ward who consider they have a long term health problem or disability.</p> <p>We will consider further what targeted action can be put in place to address this.</p>
Trish Codrington, Clerk, Minster-on-Sea Parish Council	<p>Do you support the four Equality Objectives listed in the draft scheme? - Yes.</p> <p>Are there any other Equality Objectives which you think should be incorporated into the scheme? - No.</p> <p>Do you support the key actions listed in the draft scheme? - Yes.</p> <p>Are there any other key actions you think should be incorporated into the scheme? - No.</p> <p>Do you have any other comments on the draft Corporate Equality Scheme? - Well done!</p>	Noted.

Organisation	Comment(s)	Proposed action
Sheldwich, Baddlesmere and Leaveland Parish Council	<p>Do you support the four Equality Objectives listed in the draft scheme? - Yes.</p> <p>Are there any other Equality Objectives which you think should be incorporated into the scheme? - No.</p> <p>Do you support the key actions listed in the draft scheme? - Yes.</p> <p>Are there any other key actions you think should be incorporated into the scheme? - No.</p>	Noted.
Cllr Peter Finch, Member of Teynham Parish Council	<p>Do you support the four Equality Objectives listed in the draft Scheme? – Yes.</p> <p>Are there any other Equality Objectives which you think should be incorporated into the Scheme? – Yes.</p> <p>If yes, please describe them: Make sure any detailed proposals are deliverable at Parish Council level and funds are made available.</p> <p>Do you support the key actions listed in the draft scheme? – Yes.</p> <p>Are there any other key actions which you think should be incorporated into the Scheme? – Yes.</p> <p>If yes, please describe them: Target improvements to access arrangements for elderly and disabled people. Make SCB information available in foreign languages.</p>	Noted. Objective 3 already describes how the Council is improving its customer care and providing a choice of access arrangements to our services. In addition, Objective 2 is focussed on supporting Swale’s most vulnerable residents.
Robert Anglin	<p>Do you support the four Equality Objectives listed in the draft Scheme? – Yes.</p> <p>Are there any other Equality Objectives which you think should be incorporated into the Scheme? - No.</p> <p>Do you support the key actions listed in the draft scheme? – Yes.</p> <p>Are there any other key actions which you think should be incorporated into the Scheme? – Yes.</p> <p>If yes, please describe them: There is no overtly advertised specific point of contact for equality issues. A person moving to Swale would be hard pushed to quickly find a person to speak to if needed.</p>	Noted. This will be rectified when the new Corporate Equality Scheme is published.

Organisation	Comment(s)	Proposed action
	<p>Do you have any other comments on the draft Corporate Equality Scheme? There is some very useful statistical information in the report. However, the report does not indicate how well the council performed under the last equality scheme.</p> <p>The equality scheme suggests that equality will be underpinned throughout the Borough but does not say how it will and in what way specifically. Half a page of case studies to show what Swale has done or is going to do moving forward would distinguish this report as a proactive tool rather than a document designed to tick a box.</p>	<p>Agreed. A summary of what has been achieved under the previous Scheme has been incorporated into the report to Cabinet and Council seeking endorsement/ approval of the new Scheme.</p> <p>Noted. Delivery of the key actions in the scheme listed under each of the four objectives will be incorporated into each Department's Service Plan. See also the response to comments from Lynsted with Kingsdown Parish Council below.</p>
Stephanie Curtis, Safer and Stronger Communities Officer, Swale BC	<p>As briefly discussed earlier, there were just a few points I wanted to input into the consultation.</p> <p>Reference Objective 1 and the implementation of the Prevent Action Plan - I would be inclined to remove this as the action plan was due for completion at the end of the last financial year. Ongoing work to tackle the Prevent agenda is just part of the wider Community Safety Partnership work, so would be covered by the bullet point above.</p> <p>Reference Objective 2 - I would suggest the removal of the last action point in relation to SATEDA and replace with the below, as a large element of the work of the CSP is identifying and supporting vulnerable victims, over and above the domestic abuse agenda:</p> <p><i>'through the work of the Community Safety Partnership seek to identify and support vulnerable victims of crime and ASB, focusing on those issues and</i></p>	<p>Agreed. Scheme amended accordingly.</p> <p>Agreed. Scheme amended accordingly.</p>

Organisation	Comment(s)	Proposed action
	<i>vulnerable groups as identified in the annual Community Safety strategic assessment'.</i>	
Teynham Parish Council	<p>Cllr Whiting fed back from a meeting of Teynham Parish Council which was considering the draft Scheme as part of the agenda.</p> <p>The members of Teynham Parish Council, while welcoming most aspects of the draft Scheme, were disappointed to note that it made no reference to parish or town councils.</p>	Scheme amended to refer to parish and town councils as one of the Council's key partners.
Lynsted with Kingsdown Parish Council	<p>Do you support the four Equality Objectives listed in the draft Scheme? -Yes.</p> <p>Are there any other Equality Objectives which you think should be incorporated into the Scheme? – Yes.</p> <p>If yes, please describe them: See below</p> <p>Do you support the key actions listed in the draft scheme? Yes</p> <p>Are there any other key actions which you think should be incorporated into the Scheme? – Yes.</p> <p>If yes, please describe them: See below</p> <p>Do you have any other comments on the draft Corporate Equality Scheme? Overall I thought the document was ok but lacked vision in terms of the impact it would have on Swale - what will success look like - and in the activities under the objectives it wasn't clear on how these would improve equality - some were fairly generic.</p> <p>No mention of an evaluation strategy and most statements would be difficult to monitor any change as there are no targets for improvement. This means we won't be able to tell whether the scheme had any impact over its lifetime and they won't be able to prioritise resources on areas that need improving. How will Swale assess activities/ spend for compliance with the Act?</p> <p>I also felt it could do a bit more to set out how the council will take proactive action to improve issues in Swale that fall below standards set out in the Equality Act - either at objective level or for specific cases.</p>	<p>Noted and Scheme amended where appropriate.</p> <p>The key actions will be embedded in Departmental Service Plans. Delivery of these actions will be monitored on a monthly basis in accordance with the Council's long-established arrangements. These monthly reports are published on the Council's website.</p>



Organisation	Comment(s)	Proposed action
	<p>On specific sections: Page 7. I would expect a change in the priorities as stated so that they have a specific objective in the corporate plan on equality</p> <p>On the four objectives set out on page 9, I would expect to see something on how they will proactively tackle discrimination when they come across it in any area of activity. On page 10 would be useful for an explanation of how key actions will specifically contribute to equality - most are fairly generic. On objectives 1 and 2, how will they promote economic inclusion for disadvantaged or vulnerable groups, and also could have a more general comment committing to ensure all council services will comply with the Equality Act.</p>	<p>The Corporate Plan is set for a three year period, but is 'refreshed' on an annual basis to ensure it is up to date. The question of whether there should be a specific equality objective will be considered as part of the next 'refresh'.</p> <p>The four equality objectives in the Scheme are designed to encapsulate the broad direction the Council will take.</p>
Policy Development and Review Committee	<p>Agree that the four objectives are the right ones.</p> <p>Foreword – do human rights form part of the Equality Act?</p> <p>Objective 1 - Amend one of the actions to reflect that the Council will not only support community-led projects and initiatives which encourage communities themselves to work together to solve issues locally, but that they will actively promote these too.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>No – but the reference to human rights is intended to underline that the Council places a great deal of importance on our residents and communities, whatever their backgrounds.</p> <p>Agreed. Scheme amended accordingly.</p>

Organisation	Comment(s)	Proposed action
	<p>Objective 2 - The ten year difference in life expectancy across the Borough needed to be addressed.</p> <p>Amend one of the actions to 'supporting households with the greatest housing needs to access affordable housing'.</p> <p>Objective 3 – That the Council be more proactive in promoting the availability of Council documents in alternative formats.</p> <p>Amend one of the actions include the word 'fairness'.</p> <p>General – The Committee praised the content of the Scheme, including the comprehensive statistics in Appendices I and II.</p>	<p>Agreed. Scheme amended accordingly.</p> <p>Agreed. Scheme amended accordingly.</p> <p>Agreed. A more overt reference to the availability of documents in alternative formats has been incorporated.</p> <p>Agreed. Scheme amended accordingly.</p> <p>Noted.</p>

## **Swale Borough Council Equality Scheme 2011 – 2015 – Summary of progress**

### **Introduction**

The Council's previous Equality Scheme was published to cover the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2015. It was the first scheme the Council had published since the provisions of the Equality Act 2011 had come into force, and we published a year ahead of the date all public authorities were required to publish equality objectives.

The Council was part way through a major programme of improvement when the last scheme was published, which meant that most of the objectives and actions were focused on Council activities rather than the communities and residents of Swale.

The scheme contained three equality objectives:

- (1) Build equality in how we commission, procure and deliver services;
- (2) Promote equality as a local employer; and
- (3) Improve local engagement.

Each objective contained a number of areas for improvement, and a summary of what progress we made against these is set out below.

### **Build equality in how we commission, procure and deliver services**

We completed all eleven actions under this objective including:

- strengthening our equality procurement framework so that suppliers could demonstrate their commitment to equality;
- identifying the equality profile of organisations that supply service for us; and
- continuing to improve the accessibility of our services, including the usability of our website.

### **Promoting equality as a local employer**

We completed all 16 actions under this objective including:

- identifying gaps in our knowledge base to ensure that we were prioritising key equality areas in our work, and enhanced our monitoring and analysis systems to improve data collection;
- encouraging the diversity of our staff to reflect the communities we serve, and continued to monitor our workforce profile;
- continuing to improve accessibility of our working practices and buildings; and
- continuing to provide our staff and councillors with relevant ongoing training and development on equality and diversity issues.

## **Improving local engagement**

We completed 15 actions under this objective including:

- developing a robust and accessible communications strategy;
- quality assuring sample publications with brand guidelines; and
- running training sessions for Councillors on the Public Sector Duty.

One action was cancelled and further progress still needs to be made on another five actions.

# Community Impact Assessment

A Community Impact Assessment (CIA) is a document that summarises how the council has had due regard to the public sector equality duty (Equality Act 2010) in decision-making.

## When to assess

A CIA should be carried out when you are changing, removing or introducing a new service, policy or function. The assessment should be proportionate; a major financial decision will need to be assessed more closely than a minor policy change.

## Public sector equality duty

The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on the council, when exercising public functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- 1) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- 2) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- 3) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

These are known as the three aims of the general equality duty.

## Protected characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 sets out nine protected characteristics that apply to the equality duty:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership\*
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

\*For marriage and civil partnership, only the first aim of the duty applies in relation to employment.

**We also ask you to consider other socially excluded groups**, which could include people who are geographically isolated from services, with low literacy skills or living in poverty or low incomes; this may impact on aspirations, health or other areas of their life which are not protected by the Equality Act, but should be considered when delivering services.

## Due regard

To 'have due regard' means that in making decisions and in its other day-to-day activities the council must consciously consider the need to do the things set out in the general equality duty: eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

How much regard is 'due' will depend on the circumstances and in particular on the relevance of the aims in the general equality duty to the decision or function in question. The greater the relevance and potential impact, the higher the regard required by the duty. The three aims of the duty may be more relevant to some functions than others; or they may be more relevant to some protected characteristics than others.

## Collecting and using equality information

The Equalities and Human Rights Commissions (EHRC) states that 'Having due regard to the aims of the general equality duty requires public authorities to have an adequate evidence base for their decision making'. We need to make sure that we understand the potential impact of decisions on people with different protected characteristics. This will help us to reduce or remove unhelpful impacts. We need to consider this information before and as decisions are being made.

There are a number of publications and websites that may be useful in understanding the profile of users of a service, or those who may be affected.

- The Office for National Statistics Neighbourhoods website <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk>
- Swale in 2011 [http://issuu.com/swale-council/docs/key\\_data\\_for\\_swale](http://issuu.com/swale-council/docs/key_data_for_swale)
- Kent County Council Research and Intelligence Unit [http://www.kent.gov.uk/your\\_council/kent\\_facts\\_and\\_figures.aspx](http://www.kent.gov.uk/your_council/kent_facts_and_figures.aspx)
- Health and Social Care maps <http://www.kmpho.nhs.uk/health-and-social-care-maps/swale/>

At this stage you may find that you need further information and will need to undertake engagement or consultation. Identify the gaps in your knowledge and take steps to fill these.

## Case law principles

A number of principles have been established by the courts in relation to the equality duty and due regard:

- Decision-makers in public authorities must be aware of their duty to have 'due regard' to the equality duty
- Due regard is fulfilled before and at the time a particular policy is under consideration as well as at the time a decision is taken. Due regard involves a conscious approach and state of mind.
- A public authority cannot satisfy the duty by justifying a decision after it has been taken.
- The duty must be exercised in substance, with rigour and with an open mind in such a way that it influences the final decision.
- The duty is a non-delegable one. The duty will always remain the responsibility of the public authority.
- The duty is a continuing one.
- It is good practice for those exercising public functions to keep an accurate record showing that they have actually considered the general duty and pondered relevant questions. Proper record keeping encourages transparency and will discipline those carrying out the relevant function to undertake the duty conscientiously.
- The general equality duty is not a duty to achieve a result, it is a duty to have due regard to the need achieve the aims of the duty.
- A public authority will need to consider whether it has sufficient information to assess the effects of the policy, or the way a function is being carried out, on the aims set out in the general equality duty.
- A public authority cannot avoid complying with the duty by claiming that it does not have enough resources to do so.

Examples of case law can be found here [EHRC relevant case law](#). They include examples of why assessing the impact **before** the decision is made is so important and case law around the need to have due regard to the duty

<b>Lead officer:</b>	Bob Pullen, Policy and Performance Officer
<b>Decision maker:</b>	Endorsement by Cabinet, approval by Council
<b>People involved:</b>	Bob Pullen
<b>Decision:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy, project, service, contract</li> <li>• Review, change, new, stop</li> </ul>	The Corporate Equality Scheme 2016-2020 is a new scheme that replaces the Council's previous scheme which was in place from April 2011.
<b>Date of decision:</b> The date when the final decision is made. The CIA must be complete before this point and inform the final decision.	SMT agreed an earlier draft of the Corporate Equality Scheme on 24 May 2016. Cabinet will be asked to endorse the Scheme on 13 July 2016 and Council will be asked to approve it on 27 July 2016.
<b>Summary of the decision:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aims and objectives</li> <li>• Key actions</li> <li>• Expected outcomes</li> <li>• Who will be affected and how?</li> <li>• How many people will be affected?</li> </ul>	<p>The Scheme contains four equality objectives as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Supporting integration and cohesion in our local communities;</li> <li>2. Supporting our vulnerable residents;</li> <li>3. Ensuring easy, clear and convenient access to our services; and</li> <li>4. Promoting equality as a local employer.</li> </ol> <p>Each equality objective is supported by a range of key actions which will be imbedded into service plan action plans to ensure they are monitored and delivered.</p> <p>The Scheme contains comprehensive data on the number of people in Swale with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.</p>
<b>Information and research:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline the information and research that has informed the decision.</li> <li>• Include sources and key findings.</li> <li>• Include information on how the decision will affect people with different protected characteristics.</li> </ul>	<p>Extensive research has been undertaken on the equality and diversity key characteristics of Swale's residents. Information and data has been sought from the Office for National Statistics, Kent County Council, Department for Work and Pensions and NOMIS.</p> <p>An analysis of the key statistical data is provided in a 12 page appendix to the Scheme which includes data sources.</p> <p>The key actions listed under each equality objective aim to improve the experience of Swale's residents in a positive way, including those with protected characteristics.</p>
<b>Consultation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has there been specific consultation on this decision?</li> <li>• What were the results of the consultation?</li> <li>• Did the consultation analysis reveal any difference in views across the protected characteristics?</li> <li>• Can any conclusions be drawn from the analysis on how the decision will affect people with different protected characteristics?</li> </ul>	<p>SMT and the Policy Development and Review Committee have been involved in early discussions to help shape the new objectives for the period 2016-2020 and the resulting Scheme.</p> <p>A full public consultation on the draft Scheme was launched on 26 February until 29 April 2016. The consultation was publicised by way of a Press Release and promotion through the Swale Community Empowerment Network's (SCEN) newsletter which is sent to just over 400 organisations and individuals across Swale. The Scheme also featured as an agenda item at a SCEN Network meeting on 19 April 2016.</p> <p>All local organisations representing those with protected characteristics were sent a copy of the draft Scheme, along with a covering letter from the Portfolio Holder inviting them to meet and discuss the draft. The Policy Development and Review Committee considered the draft</p>

	<p>Scheme at their meeting on 23 March 2016.</p> <p>All comments received have been considered and an appendix to the report to Cabinet on 13 July contains a schedule detailing all comments received and the Council's response to them. One comment has led to the inclusion of more information being provided in the Scheme on the number and distribution of elderly people with a long term health problem or disability across the Borough.</p>
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<b>Is the decision relevant to the aims of the equality duty?</b>	
Guidance on the aims can be found in the EHRC's <a href="#">PSED Technical Guidance</a> .	
Aim	Yes/No
1) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Yes
2) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	Yes
3) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	Yes

<b>Assess the relevance of the decision to people with different protected characteristics and assess the impact of the decision on people with different protected characteristics.</b>		
When assessing relevance and impact, make it clear who the assessment applies to within the protected characteristic category. For example, a decision may have high relevance for young people but low relevance for older people; it may have a positive impact on women but a neutral impact on men.		
Characteristic	Relevance to decision High/Medium/Low/None	Impact of decision Positive/Negative/Neutral
Age	High	Positive
Disability	High	Positive
Gender reassignment	Low	Positive
Marriage and civil partnership	Low	Positive
Pregnancy and maternity	Low	Positive
Race	Medium	Positive
Religion or belief	Low	Positive
Sex	Low	Positive
Sexual orientation	Low	Positive
Other socially excluded groups <sup>1</sup>	Medium	Positive

<p><b>Conclusion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider how due regard has been had to the equality duty, from start to finish.</li> <li>There should be no unlawful discrimination arising from the decision (see <a href="#">PSED Technical Guidance</a>).</li> </ul> <p>Advise on the overall equality implications that should be taken into account in the final decision, considering relevance and impact.</p>	<p>The entire Corporate Equality Scheme is concerned with ensuring the Council meets the general and specific duties of the Equality Act 2010.</p>
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## Timing

<sup>1</sup> Other socially excluded groups could include those with literacy issues, people living in poverty or on low incomes or people who are geographically isolated from services



- Having 'due regard' is a state of mind. It should be considered at the inception of any decision.
- Due regard should be considered throughout the development of the decision. Notes should be taken on how due regard to the equality duty has been considered through research, meetings, project teams, committees and consultations.
- The completion of the CIA is a way of effectively summarising the due regard shown to the equality duty throughout the development of the decision. The completed CIA must inform the final decision-making process. The decision-maker must be aware of the duty and the completed CIA.

**Full technical guidance on the public sector equality duty can be found at:**

[http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded\\_files/PSD/technical\\_guidance\\_on\\_the\\_public\\_sector\\_equality\\_duty\\_england.pdf](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/PSD/technical_guidance_on_the_public_sector_equality_duty_england.pdf)

**This Community Impact Assessment should be attached to any committee or SMT report relating to the decision. This CIA should be sent to the Website Officer (Lindsay Oldfield) once completed, so that it can be published on the website.**

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<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Agenda Item:</b>
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<b>Meeting Date</b>	27 July 2016
<b>Report Title</b>	Appointment of Local Independent Member for Swale to the Joint Independent Members' Remuneration Panel
<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	The Leader - Councillor Andrew Bowles
<b>SMT Lead</b>	Director of Corporate Services
<b>Head of Service</b>	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Democratic and Electoral Services Manager
<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Classification</b>	Open report with exempt appendix

<b>Recommendation</b>	1. Council is asked to agree the appointment of Mr Lionel Robbins as the Local Independent Member for Swale to the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel for a three year term of office.
	2. That Independent Members of the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel be restricted to two consecutive three year terms of office to maintain their independence.

## 1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 In accordance with the requirements of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2001, the Council is required to have an Independent Members' Remuneration Panel whose purpose is to make recommendations to the Council on its Members' Allowance Scheme and that of Parish Councils.
  
- 1.2 The Swale Independent Review Panel is due to meet in September 2016, to undertake a full review of the allowances scheme. As the term of office of the Local Independent Member for Swale expired in September 2015, and he had not confirmed that he would be willing to continue in the role, a recruitment process has been undertaken to find a new Local Independent Member and the Chamber of Commerce has been approached again to put forward a representative.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 In September 2010 Council agreed to establish a joint Independent Members' Remuneration Panel with Maidstone Borough Council. The Panel had four Members, namely a Local Independent Member from the Swale area, a Local Independent Member from the Maidstone area, a representative from South East

Employers and a representative from Maidstone Chamber of Commerce. The Panel is due to meet in September and will carry out a full review of the allowances scheme – Members will be asked to contribute their views via a questionnaire and there will be some opportunity for members to meet with the Panel.

2.2 The recruitment process commenced in May 2016 and the Council advertised the position over a 3 week period in the following ways: online media (Twitter and Facebook), advertisement on Swale Borough Council's website under job vacancies; advertising through the Swale Council for Voluntary Service (CVS).

2.3 Democratic Services sent out two information packs in response to expressions of interest and received two application forms. One of the applicants was a current Parish Councillor and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2001 (Part 20 (2) (a), was not eligible to sit on the panel. The remaining applicant was interviewed and, further to the interview, we are recommending the appointment of Mr Lionel Robbins as the Local Independent Member for Swale.

### **3 Proposal**

3.1 Council is asked to agree the appointment of Mr Lionel Robbins as the Local Independent Member for Swale to the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel for a three year term of office. To comply with corporate governance guidelines, we are also proposing that Independent Members of the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel be restricted to two consecutive three year terms of office to maintain their independence.

### **4 Alternative Options**

4.1 Council could decide not to appoint to the post and the vacancy could be re-advertised but this is not recommended as the proposed candidate fully meets the person specification and criteria. In addition, the legislation requires the Panel to have at least three Members and the next review by the Panel is due to commence in September 2016.

### **5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed**

5.1 The Leader is aware of the process being followed and the suggested recommendation..

### **6 Implications**

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The appointment of the Independent Member enables the Council to demonstrate good governance and discharge its duty to have an

	independent panel for the purposes of reviewing the Members' Allowances Scheme on an annual basis.
Financial, Resource and Property	The position is voluntary; any expenses are set on a travelling and subsistence only basis and shared equally with Maidstone Borough Council.
Legal and Statutory	The appointment complies with the requirements of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2001.
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	Risks of not complying with the statutory requirements will be mitigated by the actions suggested in the recommendation to the report.
Equality and Diversity	No adverse equality or diversity implications, procedures apply equally.
Sustainability	None identified at this stage.

## 7 Appendices

- 7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:
- Appendix I: **Exempt** - details of person recommended for appointment as Independent Member

## 8 Background Papers

- 8.1 None

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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