

Policy Development and Review Committee	Agenda Item: 4
Meeting Date	18 March 2015
Report Title	Corporate Equalities Strategy
Cabinet Member	ClIr Ted Wilcox, Cabinet Member for Performance
SMT Lead	Chief Executive
Head of Service	David Clifford
Lead Officer	Bob Pullen
Key Decision	No
Classification	Open
Forward Plan	
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To consider the report; 2. To make any recommendations on how the Council's new Corporate Equalities Scheme should be developed.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council published a Corporate Equality Scheme (CES) in 2011. The scheme fulfilled our duty under the Equality Act 2010 and described how we aimed to fulfil our moral, social and legal obligations to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.
- 1.2 The existing scheme is due to be replaced this year, and the purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an opportunity to influence how the new scheme is developed.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council published its current CES in 2011. This was a year ahead of the deadline set by the Equality Act 2010 and the current Scheme runs from 2011-2015.
- 2.2 The Equality Act 2010 sets out a series of specific duties designed to help public sector bodies meet the general duty. Further details of these requirements are provided in Appendix I.

- 2.3 One of these requirements is to publish specified items of information to demonstrate its compliance with the general duty across its functions, information on the effect that its policies and practices have had on people who share protected characteristics, and information to demonstrate the extent to which it furthered the aims of the general duty for its employees and for others with an interest in the way it performs its functions.
- 2.4 SBC has chosen to fulfil this function by publishing a CES, and is proposing to publish a new version, to replace the existing one, covering the period 2015-18.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an opportunity to influence how the new CES is developed.
- 3.2 The key characteristics for Swale in regard to equality and diversity are listed in Appendix II. The data for these characteristics are drawn principally from the results of the 2011 Census. Where possible, the data for Swale is compared with that for all twelve Kent districts (ie. excluding Medway), the South East, and nationally.
- 3.3 The current CES lists three priorities which are in turn underpinned by a series of 'areas for improvement'. The three priorities are to:
- build equality in how we commission, procure and deliver services;
 - promote equality as a local employer; and
 - improve local engagement.
- 3.4 The 'areas for improvement' were also listed in the CES, but the detail for how they were to be tackled was contained in a separate Action Plan which was not published. Many of the 'areas of improvement' relate to corporate or internal processes (workforce diversity, equal pay gap, workforce training etc).
- 3.5 The new CES the Council will be publishing later this year provides the opportunity to consider whether we take a similar approach, or whether the data provided at Appendix II, or other developments within the Borough, warrant a different approach.
- 3.6 The following questions are therefore designed to enable the Committee to explore what approach the Council might take:
- the data provided at Appendix II is presented at a summary level. Is it too detailed to include in the CES? Should more detailed data be provided in the draft CES? What would be gained by doing so?
 - should the CES contain new priorities? Should the focus be on Swale, its residents and its communities, rather than 'corporate SBC'?

- what should the focus be on? Community cohesion? Actions directed at groups with particular characteristics?

3.7 An indicative timeline for developing and publishing the CES is at Appendix III. It would be helpful to receive the Committee's views on this too.

4 Alternative Options

4.1 To not develop and publish a new Corporate Equalities Strategy, although this would result in the Council being in breach of the Equality Act 2010.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 The Cabinet Member for Performance has seen this report in draft, as have the Chief Executive and Policy and Performance Manager.

5.2 It is proposed to discuss the development of the new scheme with interested organisations, and a draft scheme will be issued for formal consultation later this year.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	<p>The scheme underpins all three of the Corporate Plan priority themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A Borough to be proud of; ▪ A Community to be proud of; and ▪ A Council to be proud of. <p>In addition, the scheme directly supports some of our key outcomes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ communities across Swale in which people work together to solve the issues that confront their local areas; and ▪ a low-crime Borough in which a 'zero tolerance' approach is taken to antisocial behaviour and no-one has to live in fear of crime, domestic abuse or intimidation.
Financial, Resource and Property	None identified at this stage.
Legal and Statutory	The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on local authorities to publish an Equality Scheme.
Crime and Disorder	A range of initiatives are run by the Community Safety Partnership that tackle inequality and hate crime. In particular, community cohesion work with emerging communities in the Sheerness area

	to promote fair access to services. The Prevent agenda is also in place to identify those at risk of radicalisation and the programme ensures that it is not unfairly targeting individuals based on their beliefs but on targeted risk.
Sustainability	None identified at this stage.
Health and Wellbeing	The new Corporate Equalities Strategy will support and underpin the Council's role in working in partnership to reduce health inequality and influence the improvement of and access to health and mental health services in the Borough.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	All of the implications regarding equality and diversity will be addressed either in the new Corporate Equalities Scheme itself or in the main body of covering reports. The scheme will be accompanied by a Community Impact Assessment.

7 Appendices

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

- Appendix I: Equality Act 2010 provisions
- Appendix II: Swale – Equality and diversity key characteristics
- Appendix III: Timetable for publishing a new Corporate Equalities Strategy

8 Background Papers

Swale Borough Council Corporate Equality Scheme 2011-13:
<http://www.swale.gov.uk/equalities-scheme/>

Equality Act 2010 provisions

The general duty is set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010:
<https://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance>

In summary, those subject to the Act (which includes local authorities and also applies to other organisations, private bodies or voluntary organisations who are carrying out public functions on behalf of a public authority) must in the exercise of their functions, have due 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.

These three bullet points are often referred to as the aims of the general equality duty.

The duty covers eight protected characteristics – age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. These are also known as the protected groups. The duty also covers marriage and civil partnership but not for all aspects of the duty.

The specific duties require a public authority to publish specific items of information:

- a) Publish information – publish sufficient information to demonstrate its compliance with the general equality duty across its functions. Initially, this had to be achieved by 31 July 2011, and at least annually after that from the first date of publication. This includes information on the effect that its policies and practices have had on people who share protected characteristics, to demonstrate the extent to which it furthered the aims of the general duty for its employees and for others with an interest in the way it performs its functions.
- b) Public authorities (with more than 150 employees) also have to publish the following 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. Initially, public authorities had, by 6 April 2012, to prepare and publish (i) objectives that it thinks it should achieve to meet one or more of the aims of the general duty and (ii) details of the engagement that it undertook in developing its objectives with people whom it considers to have an interest in furthering the aims of the general equality duty.

Swale – Equality and diversity key characteristics

AGE AND GENDER¹

Total population

	Swale		Kent districts	
Population	139,200		1,493,500	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
No.	68,800	70,300	731,400	762,100
%	49.5%	50.5%	49.0%	51.0%

Swale is the third most populous district in Kent. There are more females to males in Kent and this pattern is seen in all of Kent's districts. Swale has the least percentage difference between females and males in Kent.

Mean age

	Swale			Kent districts		
	Total persons	Males	Females	Total persons	Males	Females
Mean age	39.9	39.0	40.8	40.6	39.5	41.6

2013 Mid-year Population Estimates by 5-year Group and Gender

Swale

	Total persons		Males		Females	
	No.	% of total population	No.	%	No.	%
All ages	139,200	-	68,800	49.5%	70,300	50.5%
0-4	9,000	6.5%	4,600	51.3%	4,400	48.7%
5-9	8,600	6.2%	4,500	52.1%	4,100	47.9%
10-14	8,300	6.0%	4,200	50.8%	4,100	49.2%
15-19	8,900	6.4%	4,600	51.8%	4,300	48.2%
20-24	7,900	5.7%	4,200	52.4%	3,800	47.6%
25-29	8,100	5.8%	4,000	49.3%	4,100	50.7%
30-34	8,400	6.1%	4,100	48.0%	4,400	52.0%
35-39	7,800	5.6%	3,800	48.9%	4,000	51.1%
40-44	9,600	6.9%	4,700	48.8%	4,900	51.2%

¹2013 mid-year population estimates – ONS, 26/06/14

	Total persons		Males		Females	
	No.	% of total population	No.	%	No.	%
45-49	10,700	7.7%	5,300	49.8%	5,400	50.2%
50-54	9,700	6.9%	4,900	50.2%	4,800	49.8%
55-59	8,500	6.1%	4,400	51.3%	4,100	48.7%
60-64	8,200	5.9%	4,000	49.2%	4,200	50.8%
65-69	8,700	6.3%	4,300	48.9%	4,500	51.1%
70-74	5,900	4.2%	2,900	48.8%	3,000	51.2%
75-79	4,500	3.2%	2,100	47.0%	2,400	53.0%
80-84	3,200	2.3%	1,300	41.4%	1,900	58.6%
85-89	1,900	1.3%	700	36.9%	1,200	63.1%
90+	1,000	0.7%	300	25.5%	700	74.5%

Kent districts

	Total persons		Males		Females	
	No.	% of total population	No.	%	No.	%
All ages	1,493,500	-	731,400	49.0%	762,100	51.0%
0-4	91,300	6.1%	47,000	51.5%	44,300	48.5%
5-9	89,500	6.0%	46,000	51.5%	43,400	48.5%
10-14	87,600	5.9%	44,800	51.1%	42,800	48.9%
15-19	95,700	6.4%	48,800	51.0%	46,900	49.0%
20-24	90,700	6.1%	45,800	50.5%	44,900	49.5%
25-29	85,500	5.7%	42,700	49.9%	42,900	50.1%
30-34	86,600	5.8%	41,900	48.4%	44,600	51.6%
35-39	85,400	5.7%	41,600	48.7%	43,800	51.3%
40-44	104,500	7.0%	51,000	48.8%	53,500	51.2%
45-49	112,400	7.5%	55,700	49.6%	56,700	50.4%
50-54	102,300	6.9%	50,900	49.8%	51,400	50.2%
55-59	89,000	6.0%	43,900	49.4%	45,000	50.6%
60-64	86,700	5.8%	42,200	48.6%	44,500	51.4%
65-69	91,800	6.1%	44,600	48.6%	47,200	51.4%
70-74	64,100	4.3%	30,500	47.6%	33,600	52.4%
75-79	52,000	3.5%	23,900	46.0%	28,100	54.0%
80-84	39,700	2.7%	16,800	42.4%	22,900	57.6%
85-89	24,200	1.6%	9,000	37.0%	15,300	63.0%
90+	14,500	1.0%	4,100	28.3%	10,400	71.7%

Ethnicity

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

	Swale	Kent districts	South East	England
White				
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%
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups				
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%
Asian/Asian British				
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%
Black/African/Caribbean/ Black British				
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%
Other ethnic group				
Arab	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.4%
Any other ethnic group	0.1%	0.4%	0.4%	0.6%

The White ethnic group is the largest group within Swale. The proportion of this group in Swale is higher than in Kent, the South East and nationally.

DISABILITY²

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.

People with a long term health problem or disability – Census 2011

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

At the time of the 2011 Census, Swale was the fourth district in Kent with 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.

Total disability claimants, May 2014

	Swale	Kent districts	South East	England and Wales
% of total population	8.6%	7.4%	6.2%	7.7%

The percentage of people in Swale claiming a disability benefit as at May 2014 equates to 11,930 claimants. The percentage is above the Kent, South East and England and Wales averages.

²2011 Census, Office for National Statistics

Religion or belief

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

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

In 2011, Christianity remains the largest religion in Swale, Kent, the South East and England and Wales.

Marriage and civil partnerships

Marital and civil partnership status – Census 2011

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

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

Timetable for publishing a new Corporate Equalities Strategy

Date	Activity
18 March	Policy Development and Review Committee – initial discussion
April-May	Informal discussions with interested groups and development of draft Corporate Equalities Strategy
Late May/early June	Cabinet Member/SMT Lead Officer sign-off of consultation draft
8 June - 31 July	Formal consultation period
w/b 3 August	Analyse responses and finalise new Corporate Equalities Strategy
11 August	SMT Business meeting consideration
16 September	Policy Development and Review Committee consideration post-consultation
7 October	Cabinet consideration
21 October	Council consideration
End October	Publish new Corporate Equalities Strategy