

## **EMPLOYMENT MATTERS COMMITTEE**

**6 SEPTEMBER 2023**

### **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY**

Report from: Nicola Trainor, Head of Council Planning & Programmes

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#### **Summary**

This is a new strategy to be positioned above the existing Fair Access and Inclusion policy.

This strategy reinforces our commitment to embracing diversity, attracting, and retaining the best staff and providing the best and most accessible services to our residents. It includes an Equality Action Plan which is the foundation on which we will build an inclusive Council.

There may be revisions to this strategy and action plan as we understand the organisation more through improved data. However, it is proposed that the strategy and action plan is implemented now to begin the journey.

#### **1 Recommendation**

1.1 Members are asked to agree the new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy (Appendix A).

#### **2 Budget and policy framework**

2.1 This is the introduction of a new strategy and is therefore a matter for this Committee.

#### **3 Background**

3.1 The Council's aim is for Medway to be a fair and inclusive place where everyone, employees, and community, have equal access to opportunities and services, and are included and represented in decisions that affect them.

3.2 This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy and action plan is the first step in achieving this aim.

- 3.3 There is not an existing Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion strategy. There is an existing Fair Access and Inclusion policy which has not been updated for several years.
- 3.4 Achieving inclusion is an iterative process that will develop as data enables us to target our actions and measure progress. It is anticipated that the EDI strategy and action plan will mature as we understand the organisation more through improved data. However, it is proposed that the strategy and action plan is implemented now to begin the journey.
- 3.5 The existing Fair Access and Inclusion policy is currently under review with an anticipated implementation date in 2024/25.

## 4 Proposal

- 4.1 To agree and adopt this new strategy (Appendix A) with immediate effect.

## 5 Advice and analysis

- 5.1 This is a new strategy which will be communicated to all employees.
- 5.2 Diversity Impact Assessments (DIA) will be undertaken in relation to any changes that are made because of this strategy.
- 5.3 This new strategy will provide a reference document to begin the journey to improve equality, diversity, and inclusion.

## 6 Consultation

- 6.1 To inform the development of the EDI Strategy, a draft was shared with the Equality Board, Employee forums and Medway Makers. During these consultations, we asked people to give us their feedback on the equality outcomes we drafted. This feedback has been incorporated into the strategy.
- 6.2 The new strategy will be communicated to all staff who will be kept informed of any proposed changes to practice and are invited to comment and provide feedback directly, through Medway Makers, and other employee forums.

## 7 Risk management

- 7.1 There are no direct risk implications arising from this report.

## 8 Financial implications

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications to this report.

## 9 Legal implications

- 9.1 There are no direct legal implications to this report.

## Lead officer contact

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## Appendices

Appendix A – Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

## Background papers

None