



**South
Derbyshire**
District Council

Corporate Equalities Annual Report 2018/19

People Place Progress

Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on public bodies such as South Derbyshire District Council to ensure they consider the needs of individuals in their day-to-day work when developing policies, delivering services and in relation to their own employees. The Act includes the Public Sector Equality Duty, which replaced the former duties relating to race, disability and gender equality.

Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Duty was developed in order to harmonise the equality duties and to extend them across all protected characteristics. Those subject to the Equality Duty 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 equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Having 'due regard' is an important part of the duty and means consciously thinking about the three aims of the Equality Duty as part of the decision-making process.

The Act states that meeting different needs involves taking steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities. It describes fostering good relations, tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups. It states that compliance with the duty may involve treating some people more favourably than others.

Specific Equality Duties

In addition to the general duties outlined above, 'specific duties' have been introduced to help public bodies achieve the aims of the general duties. Under the specific duties, we must:

- Publish information to demonstrate compliance with Equality Duty annually
- Adopt and publish equality objectives that must be reviewed at least every four years. This was last undertaken in April 2016.

How this report is organised

This report is designed to highlight what we have done to meet the Equality Duty during 2018/19 and to demonstrate how we have continued to play our part in helping to make society fairer by tackling discrimination and providing equality for all.

The first section (page three) demonstrates how we have met the Equality Duty. Some of the work is ongoing. The second section (page 10) looks at the progress we have made in relation to meeting our equality objectives.

Information in relation to our employees can be found in our Workforce Profile.

1. Public Sector Equality Duty

This section of the report demonstrates how we are meeting or have met the Equality Duty in 2018/19.

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Eliminating discrimination, victimisation and harassment

| Area covered | Supporting information |
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| <p>Governance arrangements and local ‘champions’</p> | <p>In order to take forward issues within the Council and the local community we maintained the practice of having Elected Member champions for equalities and diversity and safeguarding.</p> <p>Corporate Equalities and Safeguarding Group (CESG) - Chaired by the Strategic Director (Corporate Services), the group includes the Elected Member champions and service level representatives.</p> <p>The main focus of the CESG is to ensure the Council meets its duty under the Equality Act 2010 and to champion the authority’s work relating to this. Its aims include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor the Annual Equalities and Safeguarding Action Plan as approved by the Finance and Management Committee; ▪ Co-ordinate the Annual Equalities Report to satisfy the requirements of the Equality Act 2010; ▪ Review safeguarding incidents as reported by the Council’s Safeguarding Officer; ▪ Share information across the Council regarding equalities, fairness and safeguarding; ▪ Consider and act on any matters arising from other forums and external agencies regarding equality and safeguarding matters; ▪ Ensure that relevant legislative changes and new initiatives are implemented across the Council as required; ▪ Receive and consider information on the Council workforce and propose actions to address areas of under representation or inequality. <p>During 2018/19 the Terms of Reference for the group were reviewed and changes made to reflect the work of the group against a backdrop of new legislation and responsibilities. They will be reviewed every two years.</p> |

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| <p>Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Elected Members and employees</p> | <p>We require all:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ election candidates to sign a compact which includes a commitment to reject all forms of discriminatory violence, harassment and unlawful discrimination ▪ staff who recruit for the Council to take part in training covering equalities ▪ employees to treat others with respect and not discriminate unlawfully against any person ▪ contractors to abide by our Equalities Statement as a minimum. <p>We have developed policies and procedures to tackle discrimination, victimisation and harassment.</p> <p>For instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ providing training in relevant policies and procedures for staff and Elected Members. In 2018/19, 38 people attended Equalities and Fairness Training ▪ standards of conduct and all relevant equalities policies and procedures are covered in inductions for new employees ▪ recording and monitoring all reports of harassment. <p>In 2018/19 as part of a conscious effort to show that we treat customers, suppliers and each other appropriately, the Council formulated an Ethics Statement that sets out our morals, known as ethics when they apply to behaviour at work.</p> |
| <p>Comments, complaints and compliments</p> | <p>We receive a variety of comments, complaints and compliments each year in relation to our services. We regularly monitor these to help improve our services and put right any mistakes we have made.</p> <p>During 2018/19, there were six (3) comments, 97 (88) complaints and 132 (159) compliments (2017/18 figures shown in brackets).</p> <p>Analysis of the complaints shows that none allege unfair treatment or discrimination. All are in relation to the services provided.</p> |
| <p>Safeguarding</p> | <p>Our responsibilities for ‘safeguarding’ are set out in our Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy.</p> <p>During 2018/19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Six Safeguarding training sessions were organised and attended by a total of 136 delegates. ▪ The Safer South Derbyshire Partnership took “Your Choice” into all four South Derbyshire secondary schools. This covers both knife crime and hate crime. ▪ 33 staff from the Active Communities and Health Partnership attended Safeguarding training provided by an external supplier. |

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| <p>Safer South Derbyshire Partnership</p> | <p>The <u>Safer South Derbyshire Partnership</u> is a statutory partnership formed under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.</p> <p>All of the priorities within the Safer South Derbyshire Partnership Plan are delivered in accordance with the overarching principles as set out in the Derbyshire Strategic Threat and Risk Assessment. Within the plan, one of the Priorities is Protecting Those Most at Risk.</p> |
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Eliminating discrimination, victimisation and harassment case study Our Ethics Statement



As part of a conscious effort to show that we treat customers, suppliers and each other appropriately, the Council now has an Ethical Statement that sets out our morals, known as ethics when they apply to behaviour at work.

We work with private, public and non-profit sectors to provide a range of services to the community and everyone involved can expect high standards of behaviour from Officers.

As an organisation the Council respects, applies and complies with the law, supports human rights and equal opportunity, protects the environment, achieves operational excellence and works for the benefit of the community.

Aligned with the Employee Code of Conduct, the Ethics Statement is based on a number of key principles and sets out standards of conduct that meet these principles and statutory provisions applicable to government activities.

The Ethics Statement provides clear guidelines on what is expected of us. It is based on a number of key principles and sets out standards of conduct that meet these principles.

The key principles are: Integrity, Accountability, Leadership, Respect, Selflessness, Honesty, Impartiality and Openness.

A poster showing our Ethical Standards has been created and copies have been displayed on noticeboards around Council buildings.

The Ethics Statement is available to everyone on the intranet and an article on the online news service was published to make everyone aware of this.

Eliminating discrimination, victimisation and harassment case study

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

As a Council we want our employees to have as many opportunities and as much advice and support as possible to help to keep a healthy body and mind and we want to ensure that if they are affected by mental health issues that they are not being discriminated against.

The Council recognises it is a most important issue and is making progress with initiatives to raise awareness, become more competent in dealing with mental health issues and providing the right culture for employees to have the confidence to come forward to openly disclose any support they may need.

To support this, various initiatives have been put in place to support staff, such as training, access to counselling support and wellbeing activities.

A section on the Council's intranet, Better Online, has been created to provide information to staff on subjects including ways to improve their wellbeing and how they can contact a trained Mental Health First Aid colleague to gain additional support and information.

A series of documents has been made available, including ones on how to manage and reduce stress and a list of counselling services. Information on easy steps that can be taken in order to improve how people feel each day have been provided through a Five Ways to Wellbeing initiative.

A Mental Health Awareness course for Managers was held at the Civic Offices in 2018/19. The full-day session was designed to provide knowledge and skills for managers/team leaders and supervisors to recognise the signs of mental health in the workplace and provide appropriate support for employees. It covered ways to:

- Increase understanding and knowledge of mental health and the role that managers play;
- Ensure managers are aware of your legal and statutory obligations in relation to mental health conditions;
- Build confidence in taking positive action to support employees with mental health issues to remain at work or return at the earliest opportunity.

Training was also provided to enable staff to become Mental Health First Aiders. As a result, the Council now has four trained members of staff from around the organisation to whom employees can chat about their mental health in complete confidence.

The course covered ways to build confidence in taking positive action to support employees with mental health issues.



Advancing Equality of Opportunity

| Area covered | Supporting information |
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| <p>Corporate policies, vision and values</p> | <p>Our Corporate Plan 2016 - 2021 sets out plans and priorities for delivering local services. One of the key outcomes centres on equality and diversity.</p> <p>The South Derbyshire Partnership is committed to planning for the kind of future our communities want. During 2017/18 the Partnership refreshed its strategy, with an event staged to enable people to find out more about the partnership's work, its achievements and plans for the future. It will be reviewed again in 2020.</p> <p>Our Equalities Statement outlines our ongoing commitment to advancing equalities and fairness while celebrating the diversity of South Derbyshire.</p> |
| <p>Other policies, plans and strategies</p> | <p>During 2018/19 we have developed a Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement and staff guidance on Modern Day Slavery has been produced.</p> <p>Key staff from the Council's Housing and Environmental Health teams have been on training provided by Derbyshire County Council.</p> |
| <p>Making services accessible to all</p> | <p>Section 165 and Section 167 of the Equality Act 2010 came into force on April 6, 2017 and aims to prevent discrimination against wheelchair users by private hire drivers.</p> <p>Section 167 gives us the power to make a list of wheelchair accessible vehicles so that wheelchair users are made aware of the accessibility of private hire vehicles within South Derbyshire.</p> <p>The current list of wheelchair accessible vehicles that we licence is available on our website.</p> |
| <p>Making our website comply with Equalities needs and requirements</p> | <p>Our current website was launched in October 2017.</p> <p>It is coded to nationally accepted accessibility standards:</p> <p>WACG guidelines - Level AAA W3C / WAI testing methodology for HTML5</p> <p>It also has several clearly marked, additional features to support those with visual impairments.</p> <p>These features have been introduced as a result of extensive research, usability testing, data analysis and online feedback.</p> |

Advancing equality of opportunity case study

SPRINGBOARD

During 2018/19, 22 of South Derbyshire District Council's (SDDC) employees from throughout the organisation with colleagues from elsewhere in Derbyshire successfully completed the Springboard Programme.

Springboard is designed to help women take more control over their career development by identifying practical and realistic steps that they want to take and then building the skills and confidence to take them.

The women from SDDC attending came from a mixture of posts within the organisation, including admin assistant and manager. They were joined for the four full-day workshops of the programme by nine members of staff from the Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA).



Each of the workshops, run at Oakland Village in Swadlincote, has been led by Vanessa Boon, Founder MD of Energise - people development & diversity, and has also included a guest speaker, either from SDDC, PDNPA or from an external organisation.

Alongside the guest speakers, the workshops have involved motivational trainer inputs, activities in pairs and working in small groups. Subjects covered included setting goals, the influence of stereotypes, assertiveness and networking. The workshops themselves provided an opportunity to network with other women.

On completing the programme, all SDDC delegates were presented with their certificates by Allison Thomas, Strategic Director (Service Delivery) and Theresa Reid, Head of Human Resources at the Peak District National Park Authority gave the PDNPA staff their certificates.

Feedback from those who attended was very positive. One said: “The course opened my eyes and made me appreciate more my fellow female colleagues more than I realised.

“I have found myself taking more of an interest in other people and giving praise and compliments more than I would have.

“I really enjoyed the inspirational speakers at each session and something I will take with me from the course is to network more, volunteer for more things, to ask 'stupid' questions, push myself out of my comfort zone as often as I can and believe in myself!”

Another commented: “The course has allowed me to reflect on my past choices and given me the confidence to develop my career.

“The course has perhaps shown me more that today is the most important day to make a change not tomorrow or next week. I believe this course has given me the confidence to expect more of myself and the world around me.”

Fostering good relations

| Area covered | Supporting information |
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| <p>Signposting to support groups, voluntary organisations and other partners for help and assistance</p> | <p>Our website includes a page dedicated to volunteering to raise awareness of support groups and voluntary organisations that provide advice and support to different sections of the community.</p> <p>External links are also provided to a talking newspaper and books to enable people who are blind, have a visual impairment or find it difficult to hold a book to enjoy newspapers and reading material in an accessible format.</p> |
| <p>Community Engagement</p> | <p>Community Engagement encourages individuals to make a real contribution to the decisions that affect their homes and communities.</p> <p>Involvement means that customers are able to provide us with a valuable source of feedback, which improves services.</p> |
| <p>Social cohesion and celebrating diversity</p> | <p>We:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ raise awareness ▪ promote understanding ▪ get actively involved in local and national activities, events, campaigns, festivals and commemorations <p>We develop and hold arts and recreational initiatives with our partners to celebrate and promote diversity through mediums including dance, music and sport. Examples include Orchard Day celbHolocaust Memorial Day tree.</p> |
| <p>Communities Forum</p> | <p>Together with South Derbyshire CVS, we established the Communities Forum to address equality and diversity issues.</p> <p>Membership includes voluntary sector organisations and interest groups who represent individuals discriminated against because of their gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, age, physical or mental disability.</p> <p>The forum provides training and advice sessions for voluntary and community groups and provides them with opportunities to network.</p> |
| <p>Understanding our diverse communities</p> | <p>We access Census and other socio-economic demographic data to inform our work.</p> <p>We publish information about the make-up of our communities, such as area profiles, plans and strategies, and highlight any inequalities or issues to be addressed.</p> |

Fostering good relations case study Safer Homes

Safer Homes South Derbyshire is a free service to improve security and make sure older (aged 60+), disabled or vulnerable people who live in South Derbyshire feel safe in their homes.

The operative plays a significant role in fostering good relations with residents, both through the work of this project and as a result of assisting with other community projects such as Bike Marking and providing Van Alarms at events with the police.

He has helped put up signage including ones relating to nuisance motorbikes in anti-social behaviour (ASB) hotspot areas and has leaflet-dropped in areas where a distraction burglary has occurred.

Safer Homes was set up and is managed by the Safer South

Derbyshire Partnership. It works to improve security in the homes of victims of crime, the elderly (over 60) and vulnerable by installing additional door and window locks and other safety equipment free of charge. Free crime prevention advice is also given out.

It is operated on a day-to-day basis by South Derbyshire CVS.

2018/19 saw an increase in the number of visits with 53 more carried out than in 2017/18. There were 416 visits in 2018/19 compared with 366 in 2017/18, representing an increase of 15%.

The feedback from service users has been excellent, clearly demonstrating that this project fosters good relations as well as meeting our Equality Objective of “Protect and support the most vulnerable”.

Comments received include one from a service user from Swadlincote who said: “I think it is a very good service, thank you very much. It will help me feel safer at night.”

Another, from Hilton, said: “I am so impressed with the service I received, it is lovely to feel safe in my home.”

A client from Aston-on-Trent added: “The worker arrived on time and proved extremely helpful in terms of sound advice and installation of security equipment.

“I am very satisfied and can/will highly recommend to others.”



“Very friendly representative. Fitted the door chain quickly and cleanly. Gave lots of advice. Will recommend your services to our friends.”

Safer Homes service user

2. Equality Objectives

This section of the report demonstrates how we are meeting or have met our Equality Objectives in 2018/19.

Our Equality Objectives were identified through consultation with residents and partners and are set out in the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy 2009 - 2029, an overarching policy framework for our Corporate Plan.

They are:

Objective 1: Provide accessible services which reflect the needs of South Derbyshire residents.

Objective 2: Protect and support the most vulnerable, including those affected by financial challenges.

Objective 3: Enable people to live independently.

| Objective 1: Provide accessible services which reflect the needs of South Derbyshire residents | |
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| Area covered | Supporting information |
| Community Engagement | <p>We have a group of tenants involved in various aspects of housing service delivery. During the year we introduced a task and finish approach to involvement at the request of the involved tenants.</p> <p>During 2018/19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We sent out the STAR Survey (Survey of Tenants and Residents) to all our tenants to find out what they think about us. • Young people from across South Derbyshire have been involved in community work to raise their awareness of the importance of community spirit. • Working in partnership with our Publications Panel of tenants, we produced and published Housing Services' Annual Report. • We ran community and consultation projects. |
| Sports, leisure and recreational activities | <p>We ensure our sports and leisure provision reflects the needs of 'protected' groups and our Sport and Health Strategy aims to support the delivery of local and national objectives, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people participation and volunteering • Adult participation and volunteering • Reaching communities - addressing local needs |

Objective 1: Provide accessible services which reflect the needs of South Derbyshire residents

Housing allocations and homelessness

We have a statutory responsibility to manage and review the housing waiting list.

We allocate all our properties through '[choice-based lettings](#)'.

Everyone applying for a place on our waiting list is put into a priority band depending on need. If potential tenants see a property they are interested in, they are allowed to 'bid' for it. The 'bidder' with the greatest housing need is allocated the property.

We work with partners to provide advice and assistance for a wide variety of issues and to prevent homelessness. We raise awareness of other organisations that can help and provide links to them from our website.

Our Homelessness Prevention Strategy sets out how we're working to reduce and prevent homelessness.

The Housing Advice and Options Team provides free information, assistance and specialist advice to landlords, tenants and owner occupiers to help prevent homelessness.

The team can:

- negotiate with friends and family on behalf of residents to enable them to stay where they are for longer while we help them to find something more suitable
- provide debt counselling services with independent financial advisors
- negotiate with residents' landlords if they have arrears
- see whether residents are eligible for mortgage advice
- help tenants to find a rented property in the private sector, in some cases we can help with a deposit
- help residents to apply for social housing
- help single people to access hostel accommodation
- provide practical help and support if a resident needs to leave home because of violence or abuse.

The number of people on the housing register at 31st March 2019 was 701 (644 in the previous year).

We have accommodated many applicants throughout the year in our own stock, which is brought to a 'fit to let' standard before being offered to potential new tenants.

Assistance is also provided to people in finding accommodation in the private sector through our Housing Options service and Home Swapper schemes.

Objective 2: Protect and support the most vulnerable, including those affected by financial challenges

| Area covered | Supporting information |
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| Dementia Action Alliance | We are a member of the South Derbyshire Dementia Action Alliance (DAA) . Its actions this year have included helping deliver a programme of activities for Dementia Awareness Week. |
| Universal Credit | <p>Universal Credit, one of the changes to the Benefits system under the Welfare Reform bill, was added to the agenda of the Corporate Equalities and Safeguarding Group agenda as a standing item.</p> <p>With rollout starting in November 2018, a plan for raising awareness and offering support was drawn up and a multi-agency Welfare Reform group was created.</p> <p>Actions to have come out of that include running a drop-in advice and support session event in partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions and Trident Reach.</p> |
| Safer Places scheme | The Safer Places scheme, supported by the leading national charity MacIntyre , aims to keep vulnerable adults safe if they feel scared, threatened or are in trouble while out and about. |

Protect and support the most vulnerable case study Benefit enquiry

Our Customer Services team members have all attended safeguarding courses and are very familiar with appropriate action if they have any concerns about visitors to the Civic Offices.

This proved extremely useful in 2018/19, particularly in a case where an elderly male customer approached reception to ask for help with Benefit forms. When the team member explained what he needed to do, he said he “could not cope” and was “very depressed and felt suicidal”.

The receptionist immediately made a safeguarding referral but could not get the case out of her mind.

She talked to her manager about the case and the two of them approached the Council’s Safeguarding Officer for advice. He suggested that knowing the area in which the resident lived, they could try to identify his GP surgery.

Phone calls were made, and they managed to speak to his doctor. The surgery said they would contact the man concerned immediately.

He has since returned to the Civic Offices to thank our team for their support and understanding.

Objective 3: Enable people to live independently

| Area covered | Supporting information |
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| <p>Adapting homes</p> | <p>We offer a range of locally determined ‘discretionary’ grants or provide assistance through loans and equity release products or a combination of both. Details on providing housing assistance are contained in our Private Sector Housing Policy documents.</p> <p>Residents who have problems managing their home because they have a disability can access various types of help, such as making minor adaptations to their homes. For instance, grab rails, stair rails and lever taps can be fitted to help around the home. See the case study on Page 15 for an example.</p> <p>If the property is rented from us minor adaptations can be requested directly. Homeowners or tenants who rent from private landlords need to contact Social Services.</p> <p>For major adaptations, residents can apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant to help pay for the works, such as installing a stair lift and widening doorways.</p> <p>If a home cannot be reasonably adapted, there is an option to consider moving to a more suitable property, where a Disabled Relocation Grant may be available to help with costs involved.</p> |
| <p>Supported housing schemes</p> | <p>Supported housing schemes consist of flats, bed sits and bungalows, which have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to the services of an off-site Careline Support Coordinator (CSC) • Their own private facilities <p>Supported housing is designed for people who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of pensionable age • Nearing pensionable age and whose circumstances would benefit from the services offered within sheltered housing • Able to live independently but would benefit from the services provided by the scheme <p>Careline is located at Oakland Village in Swadlincote. CSCs offer support and advice and act on residents’ behalf to get help from other organisations, such as Social Services.</p> <p>CSCs can help with other housing issues such as repairs and maintenance and tenancy issues.</p> |

Case study: Enable people to live independently

Housing adaptations

Our Housing Adaptations Team works to support as many tenants as possible to live independently in their homes for as long as possible.

It provides adaptations and other aids to those who are elderly, disabled, physically impaired, have long-term medical conditions or who have other needs and would benefit from aids to help in their day-to-day lives.

There are plenty of examples of how their work helps people to continue to live independently, here is just one.

Council Flat adaptation for a disabled tenant

The Housing Adaptations team had a referral from a Community Care Worker (CCW) requesting that a stair lift and level access shower be provided for a resident at her flat in Woodville.

When they attended a joint meeting on site, it was apparent that the tenant was very anxious about the proposed changes.

After the initial visit, Housing Services' Technical Officer went above and beyond and not only issued drawings and a specification for the works but offered additional information and advice.

He took photographs of completed adaptations at other properties to provide the resident with a better understanding of what to expect and provided practical advice about what would happen whilst the work was underway.

The officer also liaised with contractors and ensured that the resident was kept informed about when the works would be completed, visited her flat to see how the work was progressing, and that she was satisfied so far.

When the adaptation was completed, the officer visited for a final time to make sure that the works had been completed in line with the specification, and the job was signed off.



Disabled Facilities Grants are made available to help pay for alterations that assist with getting into or around the home such as ramps, stairlifts and level access showers.

The Disabled Facilities Grant is available for owner/occupiers, private tenants, Council tenants and housing association tenants.