

Equality Impact Assessment

Equality Policy Statement and Objectives
2022-2026



Section 1: Introduction and background

What is being assessed?	Equality Policy Statement and Objectives 2022-2026
Business unit	Corporate Governance & Strategy
Job title of assessor	Senior Project and Performance Officer
Strategic Management Lead	Interim Deputy Chief Executive
Date of assessment	04/10/2021
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	Existing policy that has been reviewed and updated for 2022-2026

Description of the function or policy, including:

- **The aims and scope**
- **The main beneficiaries or users**
- **The main equality issues and barriers, and the protected characteristics¹ they relate to (not all assessments will encounter issues relating to every protected characteristic)**

The Equality Policy Statement and Objectives 2022-2026 (“The Policy”) sets out MVDC’s commitment to adhering to equality legislation requirements, including the Public Sector Equality Duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010. As well as the Council’s aim to be fair and accessible when delivering, designing and evaluating services, buying services from others, developing policies, and considering the needs of Council employees.

The Policy emphasises the importance of Equality Impact Assessments in demonstrating that the organisation has considered the three aims of the equality duty as part of its decision making processes.

The Policy includes two objectives:

Objective 1: Improving use of data and local intelligence in decision making

Objective 2: Ensuring information and services are accessible to residents and service users

Delivery of these objectives over the next four years should improve the outcomes for all the protected groups, as well as other factors that are taken into consideration as part of MVDC’s equality impact assessments (ie Carers).

Description of how the function or policy fits into the Council’s Corporate Priorities or other local, regional or national plans and priorities

¹The protected characteristics are age, sex, disability, pregnancy and maternity, race and ethnicity, religion and belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership (Source: Equality Act 2010)

MVDC's commitment to equality underpins the delivery of all elements of the Council Strategy 2019-2024. It also directly contributes to the delivery of the priority 'Community Wellbeing: Active communities and support for those who need it' and two of the guiding principles, 'Putting People First' and 'Openness and Accessibility'.

MVDC's commitment to equality is also enhanced by the Customer Promise that reflects our organisational values to listen, trust, care, respect and lead.

Section 2: Analysis and assessment

Indicate for each protected characteristic whether there may be a positive impact, negative impact, a mixture of both or no impact – using a tick <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in the appropriate columns				
Protected characteristics	Positive	Negative	No impact	Reason
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<p>The policy statement will have a positive impact, as it sets out our approach to equalities at MVDC which includes taking into consideration impacts all protected characteristics as part of decision making.</p> <p>The two objectives for 2022-26 will focus on external facing arrangements to ensure services reflect the needs of Mole Valley residents and communities, in particular those with protected characteristics.</p>
Sex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			See reason given under 'Age'
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			See reason given under 'Age'
Pregnancy and maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			See reason given under 'Age'
Race and ethnicity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			See reason given under 'Age'
Religion and belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			See reason given under 'Age'
Gender reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			See reason given under 'Age'
Sexual orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			See reason given under 'Age'
Marriage and civil partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			See reason given under 'Age'
Other aspects to consider	Positive	Negative	No impact	Reason
Carers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			The policy statement will have a positive impact, as it sets out our approach to equalities at MVDC which includes taking into consideration impacts on carers as part of decision making.

Rural/urban access issues	✓			The policy statement will have a positive impact, as it sets out our approach to equalities at MVDC which includes taking into consideration rural/urban access issues as part of decision making.
HR issues (how will staff with protected characteristics be affected?)			✓	The objectives for 2022-26 will not be focusing on the workforce and therefore will have no impact.

What can be done to reduce the effects of any negative impacts?

Where negative impact cannot be completely diminished, can this be justified, and is it lawful?

N/A

Where there are positive impacts, what changes have been or will be made?

Who are the beneficiaries? How have they benefited?

Delivery of the objectives set out in the proposed Equality Policy Statement and Objectives 2022-2026 should improve the outcomes for all the protected groups.

Section 3: Evidence gathering and fact-finding

What evidence is available to support your views above?

Please include:

- A summary of the available evidence
- Identification of where there are gaps in the evidence (this may identify a need for more evidence in the action plan)
- What information is currently captured with respect to usage and take up of services.
- What the current situation is in relation to equality and diversity monitoring (where relevant)

In preparation for reviewing and updating the statement and objectives, MVDC conducted a self-assessment based on the Equality Framework for Local Government (Local Government Association, 2020). Current equalities arrangements were reviewed as part of this and areas for improvement were identified in all four areas of the framework: Understanding and working your communities; Leadership and organisational commitment; Responsive services and customer care; and, Diverse and engaged workforce.

As part of the work that will be done to deliver the objectives in 2022-2026 greater data and intelligence relating to residents and communities (particularly with protected characteristics) will be made available and used to better inform decision making.

How have stakeholders been involved in this assessment?

Who are they, and what is their view?

The draft policy was shared with MVDC Staff Hub and positive and constructive feedback was received, including a suggestion for wording to be tweaked to emphasise how data and intelligence would be used. All MVDC staff were also invited to give feedback via the staff intranet.

The draft policy was shared with the Surrey Diversity and Equality Network (SUDEN) which includes representatives from Surrey districts and boroughs, Surrey County Council, Surrey NHS Foundation Trusts, Surrey Coalition of Disabled People, Citizens Advice, Surrey Fire and Rescue, as well as other Health organisations. Positive feedback was received from SUDEN members.

Recommendations

Summary of the main recommendations (if any) arising from the assessment

There are no recommendations arising from this assessment.

Section 4: Action Plan

Actions needed to implement the EqIA recommendations (if any)

Issue	Action	Expected outcome	Who	Deadline for action
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a