Equality Policy and Strategy 2018 - 2022

OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL

Oxfordshire County Council Equality Policy

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1. Executive Summary

The Council's vision is to have thriving communities for everyone in Oxfordshire. We celebrate the diversity of our County and we are committed to the principles of equality, diversity, fairness and inclusion. These principles apply to both our own workforce and to the services we commission and deliver for residents.

We undertook a self-assessment using the Local Government Association Equality Framework to understand the areas where we need to develop our approach to equalities. This self-assessment, along with public consultation has been developed into the eight objectives in the Equality Policy and Strategy 2018-2022:

1. It is important that we know who are customers are and so we will ask you to tell us more about you when you contact our customer service centre and/or our complaints team
2. We want to know what people think about the services we provide, so we will ask for feedback on our services to make sure we can take your views into account in future and our services meet everyone's needs
3. We will improve access to our public website and other digital services we provide to make sure all residents are able to access the information they need as easily as possible
4. We will improve the quality of the data we collect about our residents and service users to make sure it is as current as possible. This will help us to respond better to the differing needs of our communities when planning and designing services.
5. We want to make sure that our public buildings are accessible to all our residents and staff. We will review access to buildings we maintain to ensure that they are as accessible as possible
6. Some of our services are provided by other agencies or organisations. We will make sure they know about our commitment to the equality duty, the protected characteristics and their role in helping us meet our objectives.
7. We will improve the diversity of our workforce so it better reflects the diversity of our communities.
8. We will improve how we support our employees with disabilities so they can be fully involved in the workplace, access career development opportunities and be successful at work.

We have agreed an action plan to help us achieve these objectives. The plan is monitored quarterly by the Council's Leadership Team and Cabinet and there will be an annual report of progress made and new actions to be included.

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2. Introduction

Our overarching vision is to have thriving communities for everyone in Oxfordshire. We want to achieve this by listening to our communities to identify local needs and by working with our communities to agree the best way forward. Our prospectus sets out our goals, vision and future plans which will be delivered through our corporate plan. Through our Equalities Policy we will ensure that we include the principles of equality, diversity, fairness and inclusion in our decision making. These principles apply to our own workforce and to the services we commission and deliver to local residents. Through this document, we will set out how we apply these principles through under the Equality Act 2010 and our obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty; how we have used the Local Government Association's Equality Framework self-assessment and relevant data to develop our equalities objectives; our annual action plan and finally our monitoring and governance arrangements.

The Equality Act 2010 defines discrimination as the less favourable treatment of a person, because of protected characteristic, as compared to others who do not share that characteristic. The legislation also applies in cases where there is a belief that the person who is disadvantaged has a particular protected characteristic, whether that was a mistaken belief or not.

3. What is the Public Sector Equality Duty?

The broad purpose of the Public Sector Equality Duty is to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into our daily business, and in particular 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.

The Act identifies nine protected characteristics which are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- Religion and/or belief – this includes lack of belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

At Oxfordshire County Council, we decided that we wanted to focus on areas of disadvantage as well as the nine protected characteristics. In doing that, we have

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also taken into consideration the International Holocaust Recognition Alliance's[1] definition of antisemitism and the Race Disparity Audit published in October 2017[2]. We may choose to review and amend these additional characteristics at any time to reflect changing circumstances.

3.1 How are we meeting our responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty?

All of our work is completed within the context of the Duty: tackling discrimination; advancing opportunity and fostering good relations. There are also 3 specific responsibilities that we must do to meet under Duty:

What is the responsibility?	How does Oxfordshire County Council meet the duty?
Consider how the decisions we make and services we deliver affect people who share different protected characteristics and publish information that demonstrates how we have achieved this.	The process we use to assess potential impacts is called a Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA). All functions undergo an initial SCIA that is proportionate to the significance of the change and potential impact. The largest SCIA takes place during the annual budget-setting process. SCIAs will be available to Councillors when considering any public function. Information can be found on the Oxfordshire Insight pages here and completed SCIA's are published on our public website at: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/equality-and-cohesion. They are also available in alternative formats on request.
Annually publish information to demonstrate compliance with the general equality duty. This should include information relating to people with protected characteristics who are employees and/or those affected by policies and practices	Oxfordshire Insights publishes a 'Data Briefing – Focus on equalities' annually which provides a profile of Oxfordshire's residents based on the protected characteristics. More detailed information relating to our service users can be found in our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and published on our website: http://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/ which is also updated annually.
Prepare and publish an equality policy,	This document satisfies this

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[1] "Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities."
[2] Race and Disparity Audit: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/race-disparity-audit (accessed April 2017)

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and specific, measurable equality objectives at least once every four years.	requirement.

4. Self-Assessment of our current approach

We used the Local Government Association Equality Framework self-assessment tool to assess how we are currently performance against five performance areas. We consulted a range of staff across the organization where performance could be graded either as 'Developing', 'Achieving' or 'Excellent.'

The 5 performance areas and our assessment against them are:

Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment	Achieving
Knowing your communities	Achieving
Involving your communities	Achieving
Responsive services and customer care	Developing
A skilled and committed workforce	Achieving

The evidence gathered as part of the self-assessment has shown where we are performing well, including pockets of excellent practice. This shows that we are meeting the letter and spirit of the duties, even in situations where service change has been driven by funding pressures. We have also identified areas where we need to better meet our commitment to making Oxfordshire a fair and equal place in which to live and work.

Over the following pages, we will explain what evidence we have found through the self-assessment and the where we will be working to make improvements through our equality objectives over the next four years.

4.1 Leadership, Partnerships and Organisational commitment

Our leaders demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of our local communities. There is a strong commitment from our senior officers to embedding the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion in all our business.

Our cabinet member for Local Communities holds Equalities as part of his portfolio, and has responsibility for ensuring that we deliver our ambitions in this area.

The Council vision is to achieve thriving communities for everyone in Oxfordshire, with a particular emphasis on improving outcomes for young people, older people,

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those with disabilities and others who are vulnerable and need additional support. We also actively promote equality issues such as Transgender Remembrance Day, Holocaust Memorial Day and rainbow flag flying for LGBT awareness across the Council.

This commitment also runs through our close working with partners across the public and voluntary sector, including formal arrangement such as the Health and Wellbeing Board, Safer Communities Partnership and Stronger Communities Partnership. It is also reflected in close working relationships with local organisations in supporting individuals and communities, and in providing services directly on behalf of the council.

4.2 Knowing Your Communities

How are we currently performing? Our self-assessment highlight that whilst we collect a significant amount of data about our communities, including equality information to inform the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and strategic plans such as the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy there are still areas for improvement.

What are we going to do differently? We are going to change the ways we gather data about our customers. We have identified that we do not currently collect equality monitoring data of inbound inquires to the complaints team or to the Customer Services Centre. We also do not collect data on sexual orientation or gender reassignment, partly because the wider data required to use these as a benchmark is not currently available.

> **Objective 1: It is important that we know who our customers are and so we will ask you to tell us more about you when you contact our customer service centre and/or our complaints team.**

Why are we going to make this change? Better data about our customers, including those with protected characteristics will help us to make better use of it in planning, commissioning, and delivering services to our customers. We are working to address our approach to business intelligence to ensure effective and efficient delivery of council functions. Through our Fit for the Future programme, we will also develop smarter ways of gathering data about our customers so that they only need to tell us this information once.

What are we going to do differently? We have identified that we predominantly analyse information relating to protected characteristics in a linear fashion, as this is the format in which data are predominantly available. It is important to acknowledge that there will be many intersections within or between protected characteristics.

Why are we going to make this change? It is important that we understand the distinctive characteristics of our communities in a wholistic way. For example, in benchmarking staffing information regarding ethnic diversity, we need to understand that there are significant differences in the ethnic make-up of Oxfordshire with

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respect to different areas of the county and different age groups. This will mean that the services we deliver will take into account these variations and will be better at meeting everyone's needs.

> **Objective 2: We want to know what people think about the services we provide, so we will ask for feedback on our services to make sure we can take your views into account in future and our services meet everyone's needs.**

4.3 Involving your communities

How are we currently performing? Our self-assessment identified that this is an area where we are performing well and continuing to develop new ways of working. The Council has a long track record of engagement with residents and we are moving towards a co-production model. We understand co-production as designing, buying and reviewing services with people. We use people's strengths and expertise to help commissioners to better understand the needs and priorities of local people. This has helped us to create innovative solutions that work for people of Oxfordshire.

What are we going to do differently? There are excellent examples of co-production within adult social care and we are now working to extend this approach across the Council.

> **Case Example 1: Contract Monitoring - Quality Checkers**
> OCC need a range of learning disability services monitored (e.g. supported living, respite, day services, and in-patient services). The Adult Social Care Quality and Contracts team has been running a Quality Checkers service since 2016 in conjunction with My Life My Choice, a user-led Oxfordshire based self-advocacy organisation.
>
> Quality Checkers are people with learning disabilities who have experience of using the learning disability services. Together with a supporting family expert by experience, they monitor each service through agreed criteria and complete a monitoring feedback form. The Quality and Contracts Team use this information to inform their quality monitoring reviews and frequently quote from the Quality Checkers reports.
>
> This means that the service user voice is clearly embedded in OCC's Quality Monitoring systems.

4.4 Responsive Services and Customer Care

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How are we currently performing? We have graded this as a 'developing' area in our self-assessment. Whilst there are areas of good practice, we will make this an area of particular area focus over the course of this policy. We have developed three objectives to address this aspect of our policy:

1. Digital services and data quality
2. Accessibility
3. Services provided by other agencies

Digital services and data quality:

What are we going to do differently? We are currently redesigning our public website and seeking to introduce a range of other digital services. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) has highlighted that we have an ageing population and that 1 in 7 residents have some element of their daily lives limited by a disability. We recognise that these groups may not have the same levels of digital proficiency or preference as many in the younger age range. We need to ensure that this is considered as part of redesigning these services.

Why are we making this change? Our Fit for the Future programme is about using digital technology and data differently to create a better, smoother journey for customers so that they can access the information they need whenever they need it. As part of this process, it is important that we consider the needs of all of our customers particularly those who are more vulnerable and those with protected characteristics. We are committed to improving the data we provide but it is equally important that we analyse the information we collect effectively to shape the servicers we deliver to our residents.

> **Objective 3: We will improve access to our public website and other digital services we provide to make sure all residents are able to access the information they need as easily as possible.**

> **Objective 4: We will improve the quality of the data we collect about our residents and service users and make sure it is as current as possible. This will help us to respond better to the differing needs of our communities when planning and designing services.**

Accessibility:

What are we going to do differently? In additional to improving our online accessibility, we also need to review the physical accessibility of our buildings and transport routes to ensure that they are as accessible as possible. Protected characteristics include those which make accessing buildings more challenging. We will also take accessibility into account as part of Highways Design.

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Why are we making this change? We are reviewing the public buildings that we own and maintain to ensure that we are using them as efficiently and effectively as possible. It is important that this review also focuses on the physical accessibility of our buildings to make them as accessible as possible for our customers.

> **Objective 5: We want to make sure that our public buildings are accessible to all our residents and staff. We will review access to buildings we maintain to ensure that they are as accessible as possible.**

Services provided by other agencies:

What are we going to do differently? As well as the services we provide directly, our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion extends to services delivered on our behalf. This includes contracts, commissioned services and through services linked closely to the council such as schools. We are also committed to applying these high standards when working with our partners whether they are public, private or voluntary sector organisations.

Why are we making this change? We recognise that we need to do more to ensure that our commissioned and contracted services are aware of our equality objectives and that they contribute to achieving them.

> **Objective 6: Some of our services are provided by other agencies or organisations. We will make sure they know about our commitment to the equality duty, the protected characteristics and their role in helping us meet our objectives.**

Whilst this is an area of significant focus in the policy, the self-assessment highlighted many examples where council services have been designed to ensure they are local, accessible and responsive to differing needs:

> **Case Example 2: Home Library Service**
> Our home library service launched in 2015 offers a service to people who are unable to visit the library themselves through frailty, infirmity or a disability and would have no other means of getting access to reading materials. Over 600 customers across the county receive the service and are supported by 185 volunteers. The library service alone has over 800 volunteers in total, who last year contributed over 30,000 hours of volunteering to the service.

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Case Example 3: Highways Design
The Council residential road design guidance provides design parameters such as footway widths. It also signposts designers to documents such as 'Inclusive Mobility'. The team ensures that such factors have been considered as they audit designs, demonstrating how the highways design processes consider equality impact of highway infrastructure. Staff have attended an immersive disabilities awareness course where staff share experiences with service users as they make their way through construction sites within Oxford. This included using a wheelchair to ensure better appreciation of needs during highways design.

4.5 A skilled and committed workforce

How are we currently performing? A workforce which more closely resembles the community it serves is more likely to be one which engages intelligently with the needs of that community. Our Equality in Employment Report is updated annually and can be found here. The report provides a detailed analysis of the make-up of our workforce. A summary of the findings is included at Annex 2. In our self-assessment, we considered how we are committed to the principles of fairness, diversity and inclusion in our workforce. It is important that this commitment applies not only to the advice and training we give our staff in these areas but also and perhaps more fundamentally, in the make-up of our workforce. To demonstrate this, we have developed two objectives in relation to our workforce:

1. Improving the diversity of our workforce so it reflects our community
2. Improving our support to employees with disabilities

Improving the diversity of our workforce so it reflects our community:

What are we going to do differently? We want to work hard to make sure that our workforce is reflective of our diverse communities. We recognise that all underrepresented groups need to be considered in this regard.

Protected Characteristic	Oxfordshire	Oxfordshire County Council Workforce	Areas for development
Gender	We know that women are in the slight majority in our county (50.7% in 2014	There is a higher proportion of females working across all services in the People directorate, especially in Children's Services and Public Health.	Women are underrepresented in the infrastructure and highways function and the Fire and Rescue Service (see case study 7 below)
Black, Asian and	Black, Asian and	7.18% of our	BAME groups are

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Minority Ethnic Groups (BAME)	Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups have doubled between the 2001 and 2011 Census, though this composition varies across age groups. The BAME communities in Oxfordshire account for 9.2% of the working age population.	workforce have declared that they are from a BAME group. Although this has increased, we need to do more to ensure our workforce better represents the community.	particularly underrepresented in the Fire and Rescue Service and Law, Governance and Policy. The issues are priorities in the workforce strategy.
Age	2011 Census showed that 13.78% of our population were aged 16 – 24.	Our workforce population of 16 – 24-year olds is 3.93%, down from 4.25% in March 2015. Although this age bracket includes those in full time education or further education, we acknowledge that we need to do more to ensure this age group is represented in our workforce.	Our Apprenticeship scheme is designed to encourage younger people with the relevant career ambitions and aptitudes to consider starting a career with the Council. The scheme means that they gain both employment and a vocational qualification. Most of our apprenticeship vacancies are only open to those under 25.

Objective 7: We will improve the diversity of our workforce so it better reflects the diversity of our communities.

The self-assessment identified the following good practice initiatives to improve the diversity of our workforce, and to ensure it better reflects the local community:

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Case Example 4: Fire and Rescue Service Selection Days
Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service run a recruitment and selection event every quarter to recruit staff for the on-call duty system. This requires individuals to undertake a number of tests to ensure they have the required level of fitness and strength to undertake the role and that they have the aptitude required for working at height/working in a confined space. Earlier this year OFRS carried out a review of this recruitment and selection event, updating webpages with clearer explanations of the disciplines. There is more information given about expectations. There is increased support during the event, to make the day more open and friendly. The number of tests were reduced resulting in a shorter day, which is better for the welfare of those attending. Feedback from individuals who have attended the more recent events is very positive, including feedback from the under-represented groups OFRS are working to attract and recruit. Comments were made about how much more open, friendly and supportive they had found the day.

Case example 5: Stonewall Diversity Champion
Over the summer of 2017, we signed up as a Stonewall Diversity Champion. Stonewall are Europe's largest lesbian, gay, bi and trans (LGBT) charity. They know that people perform better when they can be themselves and that's why they have created Diversity Champions, the leading employers' programme for ensuring all LGBT+ staff are accepted without exception in the workplace. We want to ensure all our staff can be themselves at work without fear of intimidation, bullying or harassment. We have engaged Stonewall to review some of our policies, such as Equality and Diversity in the Workplace, Dignity at work, Maternity, Adoption and Paternity, to ensure we are being LGBT+ inclusive and using gender neutral language.

Case Example 6: Oxfordshire Employment Service
Our Employment Service supports equality by directly supporting adults for whom health or disability is a barrier to employment. This involves providing specific casework support, led by a skilled and qualified team. Over the last 6 years the service has worked with over 600 people. In the last year, over 60 people have found sustainable employment. Of those we support to find employment, the rate of sustainment for past 1 year is just below 70%. The service directly employs, within County Print Finishers, 24 people who have a disability. Oxfordshire Employment Service has achieved Leader status within Disability Confident.

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Improving our support to employees with disabilities:

What are we going to do differently? We already know that in the Census 2011, 13.6% of our population felt they were limited in their daily activities because of a long-standing health problem or disability. Rates of disability vary significantly by age, with the percentage increasing with age. While some will have disabilities which are of such significance that it is not realistic for them to undertake paid employment, data collected about our workforce shows a significant gap with only 3% declaring themselves to have a disability. Further, that disabled staff are disproportionately low paid. The staff survey conducted in 2016 received a 45% response rate and through this anonymous channel, 9.13% of staff declared that they had a disability or long-term health problem.

Why are we making this change? We recognise that there is currently a discrepancy between the number of staff who openly declare that they have a disability or long-term health problem. Further work needs to be done to encourage staff to declare their disabilities, so support can be provided if required.

Case Example 7: Disability Confident Employer
The Council is a Disability Confident Employer. We are committed to supporting and developing all staff and appointing the best person to do the job based on their skills and abilities. If a disabled person meets the essential selection criteria for a job, they will be guaranteed an interview. We are also committed to making reasonable adjustments to make sure disabled employees can develop and use their abilities and make every effort when employees become disabled to support them to stay in employment. The 2017 data shows that the percentage of staff declaring a disability has increased. In 2016-17 20% of disabled job applicants were appointed.

Objective 8: We will improve how we support our employees with disabilities so they can be fully involved in the workplace, access career development opportunities and be successful at work.

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5. Action Plan 2018-19

To achieve our objectives we will take the following key actions. We will monitor progress closely and update annually to reflect this, plus take on board any emerging or developing areas of focus:

	Objective	Senior Officer Lead Officer responsible	Actions	Deadline/Measure of success
1	It is important that we know who our customers are and so we will ask you to tell us more about you when you contact our customer service centre and/or our complaints team.	**Deputy Director of Customer Experience** **Complaints Information Manager**	The complaints already collect data on their customers so they will update their team recording system to ensure any complaints about equality issues can be identified and analysed.	Update to recording system complete by August 2018.
			Capability for customers to create a user account is planned under the Council's transformation programme Fit for the Future	September 2018
			We will ensure our equality principles are built into the redesign of the Council's operating model and are considered as part of the implementation of that model.	July 2018 – March 2020
			We will complete Equity Audits on our services to ensure equality of access to our services.	March 2019
2	We want to know what people think about the services we provide, so we will ask for feedback on our services to make sure we can take	**Deputy Director of Customer Experience**	All new website features will be usability tested meaning real users will try the functionality before it's released to ensure it's simple to use.	June 2018

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	Digital Services Manager **Complaints Information Manager**	your views into account in future and our services meet everyone's needs.	To ensure the complaints team can gather better feedback on their service the team will: • refresh their policy and training for having difficult conversations with complainants. • Begin developing a strategy for collecting appropriate and reliable feedback from complainants. • Commit to offering translation services to people making a complaint who struggle with the English language. Capability to gather feedback from customers across all channels of access is planned under the Council's transformation programme Fit for the Future	Policy and training plan updated by end 2018 Strategy in place by November 2018 Offer made as standard by August 2018 September 2018
3	We will improve access to our public website and other digital services we provide to make sure all residents are able to access the information they need as easily as possible.	**Deputy Director of Customer Experience** **Digital Services Manager**	We will redesign our website to meet minimum (AA WAI) Accessibility guidelines. We will design a fully responsive web design that works consistently on all devices. We will introduce assisted access to our public website in libraries, and via the customer service centre (we'll do it for the	June 2018 June 2018 All county libraries will have this function by the end of August 2018

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		citizen if they can't)		All county libraries to offer this service by August 2018
		We will to continue to offer digital helpers in libraries (https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/volunteer-be-digital-helper)		
4	We want to make sure that our public buildings are accessible to all our residents and staff and so we will carry out a review to check this.	**Director of Property and Investment** **Asset and Investment Team Manager** **Corporate Facilities Property Business Manager**	We will conduct a full 'Access to Buildings' audit For example in the Westgate Library attached to the newly completed Westgate shopping centre we are reviewing the access strategy and are looking to take out the 2 lifts in the entrance lobby and replace them with 2 new bigger DDA compliant lifts that will categorised as fire lifts. This means that mobility scooters will be able to access all levels of the building by using the lifts and also be evacuated safely should a fire alarm be activated.	End of November 2018 Planning, governance & design by end of October 2018
5	We will improve the quality of the data we collect about our residents and service users and make sure it is as current as possible. This will help us to respond better to the differing needs of our communities when planning and designing services.	**Assistant Chief Executive** **ICT Information Services Manager**	We will review and update our Council Data Quality Policy 2014 - 2018. We will continue work on our Information and Master Data Management strategy which sets out how to manage the information we hold efficiently and effectively.	Refresh by end of August 2018 First draft of the strategy completed by May 2018 First phase of implementation of the strategy complete by end of 2018.

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				Transfer of data to LAS by end of 2018.
			We will ensure that only relevant data is transferred onto the new ICT system for children's services, and that the system is used efficiently to ensure data remains current.	
6	Some of our services are provided by other agencies or organisations. We will make sure they know about our commitment to the equality duty, the protected characteristics and their role in helping us meet our objectives.	**Director of Law and Governance** **Legal/Procurement**	We will review our contracts to ensure that the Public Sector Equality Duty is included in the contract schedules for all commissioned services. We will consider including equality duty as part of our contract monitoring processes.	March 2019
7	We will improve the diversity of our workforce so it better reflects the diversity of our communities.	**Director of Human Resources** **County HR Manager** **Group Manager Development, Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service**	Develop a detailed communications strategy for Equality, Diversity & Inclusion. Directorates to develop their own action plans, supported by the HR Business Partner, to improve the diversity of their service areas We will work to increase representation of women in the Fire and Rescue Service by: • continuing our targeted media campaigns for female groups • Holding a second positive action recruitment day • Raising awareness amongst women about a career in the fire service. • Continuing our work around identifying barriers for recruitment. • Attend the national networking forum	Strategy agreed and launched in May 2018 Action plans developed by the end of July 2018 March 2019 November 2018 March 2019 March 2019 – successful if increase in numbers of applications from women continues.

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			for operational female firefighters: 'Women in the FRS'.	
				March 2018 - 19
			We will publish our Gender Pay Gap report by 31st March 2018 and annually thereafter. Further actions may be developed from this.	
			We will work towards understanding how to increase numbers of BAME staff in the workforce by identifying any barriers for BAME staff in the recruitment process.	By end September 2018
			We will review our training and guidance to increase awareness among managers of 'unconscious bias' in recruitment.	By end May 2018
			We will work towards understanding what younger people look for in employment and use this information to identify ways we can attract and retain younger workers.	End of November 2018
			We will engage with local groups and organisations to build a positive reputation for the Council among younger people.	To begin September 2018
			We will explore different advertising options, particularly use of social media, to attract younger people to apply for jobs.	From June 2018
			We will work towards a submission for the	September 2018

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			Stonewall Workplace Equality in September 2018	
8	We will improve how we support our employees with disabilities so they can be fully involved in the workplace, access career development opportunities and be successful at work	**Director of Human Resources** **County HR Manager**	We will conduct a review of OCC policies, practices and support with regard to mental health in order to make recommendations for improvements	By end of 2018
			We will raise awareness among managers to recognise invisible as well as physical disabilities and how reasonable adjustments can be made to better support our staff.	Begin by end of March 2018
			We will raise awareness among all staff on mental health and promote the half day course on this issue.	Begin by end June 2018
			We will encourage staff to declare if they have a disability and make clear we are asking for this information to improve any support that can be offered.	By end June 2018

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6. Monitoring and Governance

Our evidence gathering has highlighted a need for more robust governance and monitoring of our objectives. This is in order to further ensure that equality, inclusion and diversity is embedded within service planning and delivery across all our workstreams. Our equality objectives should be incorporated into service-level plans to ensure our equality principles are understood and acted upon at all levels within the organisation.

The Cabinet Member for Local Communities will have overall responsibility for ensuring that we are compliant with the Public Sector Equality Duty, that we achieve our equality objectives, and that they are reviewed and updated to reflect any changing or emerging priorities.

Each equality objective will be owned by a senior officer, who will oversee the implementation of agreed actions to achieve it. Responsible officers have been named in the action plan and will monitor the action plan as a whole. That group will produce quarterly updates for the County Leadership Team, Performance Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet referencing performance against our proposed actions. An annual report will demonstrate how we are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty. A working group will be drawn together from across the Council to review the annual monitoring report and develop actions for the next year.

The annual report and revised action plan will be raised to the Council Leadership Team and Cabinet, as part of the Council's performance monitoring and risk management arrangements.

We will continue to publish information about our communities, our performance, the outcomes of SCIAs, new policies, and proposals for changes in service delivery.

We will continue to consult both formally and informally with key stakeholders and the public to inform our service planning and decision-making, including our approach to coproduction.

7. Further Information

Contact details:
Policy team, 2nd Floor, County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND

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Annex 1 – Summary of data from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment on our residents

As of mid-2015, the estimated total population of Oxfordshire was 677,900. Over the ten-year period, 2005 and 2015, there was an overall growth in the population of Oxfordshire of +8%, similar to the increase across England (8.3%). The five-year age band with the greatest increase over this period was the newly retired age group 65 to 69 +38%. There was a decline in the population aged 35 to 44.

Oxfordshire County Council population forecasts, based on expected housing growth, predict an increase in the number of Oxfordshire residents of +27% between 2015 and 2030, taking the total population of the county from 677,900 to 864,200. This is more than double the growth of the previous 15 year period (2000 to 2015).

Oxfordshire Insight published a Data Briefing - Focus on Equalities in October 2015 which provides a profile of Oxfordshire's residents based on the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. More recent data on the population groups and those with protected characteristics can be found in Chapter 3 of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2017. The JSNA is updated annually and gives the most up to date profile of our communities.

Below is a short summary of information from the Equalities Briefing and JSNA at the time of writing.

- We are an ageing population

Oxfordshire's population aged between the 2001 and 2011 censuses, due to older age groups experiencing greater growth than younger groups. The 65-and-over population grew by 18%, while the number of people aged 85 and over rose by 30%. The number of people in their 30s in the County fell by 12%. The number of children aged 4 and under grew by 13%.

Between 2015 and 2030, the number of people aged 85 and over is expected to increase by 92% in Oxfordshire overall and more than double in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse.

- Women remain slightly in the majority across the county (50.7%).

- The ethnic composition of Oxfordshire changed between the 2001 and 2011 censuses.

All of the county's Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities have grown, and now account for 9.2% of the population, just under double the 2001 figure of 4.9%. There is considerable variation in ethnic composition across the county.

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According to the 2011 Census, just over 9% of households in Oxford do not have any one member who speaks English as a main language. This is over double the figure for the county as a whole.

- At the time of the 2011 Census, nearly one in seven people in the county said they were limited in their daily activities because of a disability or a long-standing health problem.

Census data shows younger age groups of people with a disability in Oxfordshire similar to or below the regional and national averages.

Rates of disability vary significantly by age and district. Younger age groups have similar or below regional and national averages, however higher rates are found in the older age groups. Wards in Oxfordshire with higher rates of disability overall are those with a higher proportion of older residents.

- Local data on sexual orientation and gender reassignment remains unavailable.

The 2011 Census did not include a question on sexual orientation and it is difficult to obtain reliable data on the number of people identifying their gender as different from the one assigned to them at birth.

- In mid-2015 one third of the population of Oxfordshire lived in areas defined as rural. 42% of the population aged over 65 years old lived in rural Oxfordshire.

- Oxfordshire has relatively low levels of deprivation overall however there is considerable variation across the county. Overall, less than 4% of Oxfordshire's population live in areas that are among the most deprived in England, however there are 2 areas within the most deprived 10% in England (in Oxford City) and a further 13 areas within the most deprived 10-20% (8 in Oxford City, 4 in Banbury and 1 in Abingdon)

Annex 2 – summary of data from our Equality in Employment Report 2017

- Ethnicity

Overall, based on those who have declared their ethnicity, the reported levels for BAME groups are at 7.18% for March 2017 which is an increase from 6.27% in March 2016. The Census 2011 showed that the county's BAME communities account for 9.2% of the working age population so the representation of this group within the council's workforce is not quite proportionate to their representation in the county. This is particularly the case for Asian or Asian British staff who make up 2.34% of the council's workforce which is an increase from 2016, but lower than their representation in the Oxfordshire community.

- Disability

The percentage of council staff declaring a disability has been gradually increasing over the last few years. The 2017 data shows that 3.20% of council staff have declared a disability which is an increase from 2.79% in 2016.

- Sex

The 2011 census showed that for the county as a whole, 49.91% of the local population of working age are female. There continues to be a much higher proportion of female workers in the County Council which has stayed relatively static with 69.14% of staff being female as at 31st March 2017. The percentage of females has reduced by 3.46% over the last 5 years. There is a much lower percentage of females working in the Communities directorate at 35.33%, with the lowest percentage in Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue service with 3.38% of whole time uniformed staff being female. The People Directorate are better represented which may be due to the nature of the work involved.

- Age

There have been no major changes in the age profile of the council in March 2017 compared to the previous year. The highest percentage of the workforce continues to be the age group 45-54 at 30.25%, followed by those aged 35-44 (23.43%) and then 55-64 (21.87%), all categories of which are higher than their representation in the population of Oxfordshire. The youngest age group 16-24 has decreased slightly over the last three years from 4.25% in 2015 to 3.93% in 2016 and continues to be under-represented in the workforce.

- Religion

Overall, numbers of staff declaring their religion have increased from 30.76% to 40.34%. Of those who have declared their religion the majority are Christian with numbers decreasing slightly from 56.55% in 2016 to 54.12% in 2017. Overall there have only been minor changes to the percentage of staff in each religious group. There has been a small decrease in the percentage of Jewish and Hindu staff. There

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has been an increase of 2.78% in people with no religion and also a small increase to the percentage of Muslim and Buddhist staff.

- Sexual orientation

Currently we do not ask applicants for their sexual orientation during recruitment and this data is unavailable for staff to update. Therefore, we are unable to report on current figures. This information was not collected during the Census 2011.

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