

Equality Analysis – Corporate Plan 2022-2026



Title of activity / Budget Proposal title and number Corporate Plan 2022-2026	Committee meeting (decision maker) and date Executive, 2 March 2022
Service area Analytics, Insight & Performance	Lead officer Mark Minion, Chief Officer Customer, Communities & Front Office
Approved by Mark Minion, Chief Officer Customer, Communities & Front Office	Date of approval 16 February 2022
<p>Description of activity:</p> <p>The Corporate Plan as a strategic document focuses on key priorities. Service plans and subsequent activities (which are in turn provide additional consideration to equality) will deliver the Plan.</p> <p>The Council's current Corporate Plan covers the period 2017-2022. The new Plan will cover 2022-2026. Although a Corporate Plan is not a legal requirement it is considered best practice for a local authority to have a high-level strategic plan in place. The proposed new Corporate Plan has 4 goals each with a descriptor as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop Places - <i>We know that our environment is crucial to our well-being in many different ways. Parks and open spaces are vital to our physical and mental health, as well as to the health of the environment overall. The Borough is blessed with a variety of outdoor spaces, parks and the river. Our transport links should benefit the environment and the local economy to support more and better jobs for local residents. Our ambitions to tackle the climate emergency are central to all of our goals</i> 2. Enable Prosperity - <i>Good quality employment is important to health and wellbeing, so we want to make sure that we support people to access education and training, and support businesses in the borough. An improved skills base will help attract new and emerging business sectors to our Borough. A component to our economic growth will be the continued sustainability of our town centres.</i> 	

3. Support People - *People of all ages deserve to be treated with respect and dignity and to live a full life. Our role, working with our partners, is to reduce risks for vulnerable people, support those in crisis, safeguard where necessary and help to maintain independence wherever possible. Housing is a key enabler for a good quality of life, as well as health and wellbeing.*
4. Empower communities - *Bedford Borough has long celebrated its cultural diversity and this has enabled strong, cohesive and inclusive communities. We want to help communities to be the best they can be. The Council's role is to listen, support and empower our communities wherever possible. This may sometimes be in partnership with the Council, or with other public sector partners*

Each of the goals is supported by three strategic priorities shown below.

Recognising that there are number of challenges the Council faces two cross-cutting themes are outlined as follows:

- *Climate Change Emergency* – to deliver what we need to do across all our services to address climate change
- *Well-being* - to support wherever possible measures to improve our residents' health and well-being including activities that help support physical and mental health

In addition, and in response to the statutory public sector equality duties, the Corporate Plan contains two equality objectives as follows:

- I. *Achieve excellence in our equality performance, practice and outcomes as measured by the Equality Framework for Local Government by 2026*
- II. *We pledge to be an anti-racist council and develop an anti-racism strategy in partnership with others*

Relevance Test

1. The outcomes of the activity directly and significantly impact on people, e.g. service users, employees, voluntary and community sector groups.	Yes	X	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The activity could / does affect one or more protected equality groups.	Yes	X	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The activity could / does affect protected equality groups differently.	Yes	X	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. One or more protected equality groups could be disadvantaged, adversely affected or are at risk of discrimination as a result of the activity.	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	X
5. The activity relates to an area where there are known inequalities.	Yes	X	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The activity sets out proposals for significant changes to services, policies etc. and / or significantly affects how services are delivered.	Yes	X	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. The activity relates to one or more of the three aims of the Council's equality duty.	Yes	X	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. The activity relates to the Council's Corporate Plan objectives, is a significant activity and / or presents a high risk to the Council's public reputation.	Yes	X	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. An equality analysis of this activity is required.	Yes	X	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
This activity has no relevance to Bedford Borough Council's duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; to advance equality of opportunity; and to foster good relations. An equality analysis is not needed.				<input type="checkbox"/>
Explanation why equality analysis is not needed				
N/A				

Scope of equality analysis

Who is / will be impacted by the activity's aims and outcomes?	As a strategic high-level document the Corporate Plan will have an impact on all residents, visitors, people who work within Bedford Borough and staff working at the Council. A number of stakeholders will be impacted by the Plan specifically health organisations (Clinical Commissioning Group), neighbouring local authorities, local parish and town councils community organisations and voluntary bodies.
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<p>Which particular protected equality groups are likely / will be affected?</p>	<p>The Corporate Plan does not list everything the Council is seeking to achieve over the next four years, however a number of identified activities at a high-level will, if implemented successfully, have a specific impact on the following equality groups.</p> <p>We have outlined and agreed 2 specific equality objectives over the period of the Corporate Plan, striving to the rated 'Excellent' under the Equality Framework for Local Government by 2026, will mean we will make positive change under the following 5 areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and working with your communities • Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment • Responsive services and customer care • Diverse and engaged workforce <p>The Corporate Plan's goals and priorities are also likely to have an impact as follows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable Prosperity: Support people to learn and develop skills (age – children & young people and adults) • Support People: Housing support (disability – provision of appropriate housing and adaptation to existing properties, support for people with 'hidden' mental health and in need of complex support; age – children & young people – provision of sufficient housing to reduce use of temporary accommodation) • Empower communities: Social growth (sex – participation in local decision-making; socio-economic disadvantage) Support people to learn (age – children & young people and adults) Participation in community life (socio-economic disadvantage)
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	<p>In addition to the Goals and Priorities above the cross-cutting themes are expected to have an impact on the following equality groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-being: Health Inequalities (sex – reducing the health gap between men and women; race – reducing health inequalities) Healthier Lifestyles (disability – encouraging healthy lifestyles, reducing periods of poor health) Disability (disability - supporting better mental health)

Evidence, data, information and consultation

<p>What evidence have you used to analyse the effects on equality?</p>	<p>The Corporate Plan and the activities described are supported by a number of national data sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ONS Census 2011 (Census 2021 will become available in 2022 onwards) • Indices of Deprivation 2019 (www.bedford.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/statistics_and_census.aspx) • JSNA 2019 (www.bedford.gov.uk/jsna) <p>These large scale datasets are supported by local policies and service level evidence including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Plan 2032 • Health & Wellbeing Strategy • Housing Strategy 2021-2026 • Understanding the Impacts of Covid: Director of Public Health Report 2020/21 (July 2021) • Homelessness and health: Director of Public Health Report (2018) • Carbon Reduction Delivery Strategy 2020-2030 • Sustainable Development and Environmental Efficiency Strategy (2018) • Customer Feedback responses
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Reports, including outturn reports for the previous Corporate Plan • Partnership working through the Borough’s established partnership bodies
<p>What consultation did you carry out with protected equality groups to identify your activity’s effect on equality?</p>	<p>The Corporate Plan was subject to general public consultation for 6 working weeks (1 November to 10 December 2021). All relevant comments have been considered as the Plan was re-drafted for consideration by the Executive. No specific comments were made in relation to equality groups.</p>
<p>What does this evidence tell you about the different protected groups?</p>	<p>From the above referenced data a number of over-arching themes can be drawn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Borough’s population is growing and ageing, particularly the 85+ age group; this group is expected to have increased health and social care needs; • Health and life expectancy is comparable to the national average but the difference between our more affluent and poorer areas is significant; • The impact of the pandemic has been uneven and has had a disproportionate impact on people from minority ethnic communities reinforcing existing health inequalities • Homelessness often overlaps with a wide range of vulnerabilities • The use of temporary accommodation has increased significantly as a consequence of the pandemic • Within the general need of housing need there is a need for accessible and adapted dwellings • Educational attainment in Bedford Borough is worse than national and comparator groups at key stage 2 and 4 and GCSE results; this is more so with children from BME backgrounds and those receiving free school meals;
<p>What further research or data do you need to fill any gaps in your understanding of the potential or known effects of the activity?</p>	<p>No further research or data is planned at this stage as analysis of outputs from the most recent Census and IMD data will continue once data is released.</p>

General Equality Duty

Which parts of the general equality duty is the activity relevant to?			
	Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Advance equality of opportunity	Foster good relations
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protecting children at risk of harm or neglect (children) Protecting adults at risk of harm or neglect (adults) Vulnerable adults are safeguarded (older people) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements in education outcomes (children & young people and adults) Promoting healthy lifestyles (socio-economic disadvantage) Increase and improvements in housing (children & young people and adults) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased community involvement and civic engagement (children & young people and adults)
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protecting children at risk of harm or neglect protecting adults at risk of harm or neglect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing periods of ill health Supporting mental health Improvements in housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased community involvement and civic engagement
Gender reassignment	None identified	None identified	None identified
Pregnancy and maternity	None identified	None identified	None identified
Race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of an anti-racism strategy, which supports dismantling of racist structures, will challenge racial inequality, disadvantage and discrimination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing health inequalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased community involvement and civic engagement
Religion or belief	None identified	None identified	None identified

Sex		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early intervention to reduce health inequalities (differences between life expectancy for men and women) 	None identified
Sexual orientation	None identified	None identified	None identified
Marriage & civil partnership	None identified		

Impact on equality groups

Based on the evidence presented what positive and negative impact will your activity have on equality?				
	Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	Explanation
Age	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Actions will respond to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational achievement gaps and skills needs; • Safeguarding concerns relating to children, young people and adults; • Promoting health lifestyles to increase life expectancy • Reducing years in poor health
Disability	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Actions will respond to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational achievement gaps and skills needs; • Safeguarding concerns relating to children, young people and adults; • Health inequalities
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	

Appendix C

Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
Race	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Actions will respond to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational achievement gaps of children from different BME groups • Reducing health inequalities • Improving and increasing community and civic engagement
Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
Sex	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Actions will respond to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health inequalities between men and women • Educational achievement gaps between boys and girls
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
Marriage & civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
Other relevant groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	

Commissioned services

What equality measures will be included in Contracts to help meet the three aims of the general equality duty?	N/A
What steps will be taken throughout the commissioning cycle to meet the different	N/A

needs of protected equality groups?	
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Actions

	What will be done?	By who?	By when?	What will be the outcome?
Actions to lessen negative impact	N/A			
Actions to increase positive impact	N/A			
Actions to develop equality evidence, information and data	Identify gaps in equality evidence. Evidence will be collected to support work on achieving 'Excellent' grading against EFLG	AIP	Ongoing to 2026	As per the EFLG we intend to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver accessible, inclusive and responsive services to customers and residents in their communities including those from under-represented groups; • Employ a workforce that reflects the diversity of the Borough; • Provide equality of opportunity for all staff
Actions to improve equality in procurement / commissioning	N/A			
Other relevant actions	N/A			

Recommendation

No major change required	X	The Corporate Plan as drafted contains a number of defined activities which will if implemented have a positive impact on various protected groups.
Adjustments required	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Justification to continue the activity	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Stop the activity	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Summary of analysis

In preparing this report, due consideration has been given to the Borough Council's statutory Equality Duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, as set out in Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010.

The Corporate Plan as drafted contains a number of activities which will have positive impacts on various equality groups including: children & young people, adults, people with disabilities, sex and race. It is also expected to have a positive impact on community relations and social inclusion

Monitoring and review

Monitoring and review The Executive will receive an annual report detailing both narrative and performance outcomes for the previous year's Corporate Plan activities.	Review date September 2023
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