



Reigate & Banstead Borough Council

Equality Objectives 2020-2024

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Introduction

This document sets out Reigate & Banstead's Equality Objectives for 2020 to 2024.

The Council is a public body which, under the Public Sector Equality Duty in the Equality Act 2010, has a specific duty to publish one or more equality objectives to demonstrate how the Council is meeting the aims of the general equality duty.

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 places a general equality duty on the Council to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

The characteristics protected under the Act are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership

Under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011, the Council is required to publish one or more objectives we think we should achieve to do any of the things mentioned in the 3 general duties listed above.

This document sets out our Equality Objectives, which have been put together following an informal review of how we currently discharge our equality duty, and using guidance published by the Local Government Association.

Find out more

We will publish information annually about our progress in delivering these objectives. To find out more:

- Visit our website at www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/equality
- Phone us on **01737 276000**
- Text us on **07834 626468** if you are deaf or hard of hearing

Our equality objectives

Equality Objective 1: Using data and local intelligence better

Continue to improve our equality data, use of local intelligence and data insight to inform future service planning and formal decision-making

Why is this important?

We need to make sure our services are sensitive to, and reflect the needs of, our residents. We can only do this by understanding what those needs are. We can use data and local intelligence to help us do this, and make sure that the right information is available to those who are involved in planning and taking decisions about service provision.

Success would be:

- Summary information about borough residents and service users with protected equality characteristics is available publicly
- Summary information about the Council's workforce characteristics is available publicly
- Information about residents and service users, including those with protected equality characteristics, is used to inform service improvements in a manner that is compliant with data protection legislation.

Our activity in this area will focus on:

- Building our data and insight capacity within the organisation
- Improving the availability of equality data, and raising awareness of service users' needs to inform service design across the council

Equality Objective 2: Supporting good community relations

Develop a greater focus on promoting social inclusivity across all the Council's services and fostering good community relations

Why is this important?

One of our new corporate objectives is to create strong, safe and welcoming communities. This means communities in which everyone (regardless of their background, beliefs, personal situation or identity) feels welcome and able to participate.

Success would be:

- Communities in the borough are places where people of different backgrounds get along
- Residents are able to participate in initiatives and activities in their communities
- Vulnerable people are better protected from abuse and/or harm
- The Council's early help activities help residents to access support, services and opportunities to improve their quality of life

Our activity in this area will focus on:

- Supporting communities through the work of our frontline teams and in partnership with other relevant organisations
- Incorporating consideration of social inclusivity in service-level strategies, service design and delivery

Equality Objective 3: Accessible information and services

Ensure that Council services, information, consultation and engagement opportunities remain accessible to all residents, particularly those with protected characteristics

Why is this important?

As a public body, we need to make sure all our residents are able to access our information and services, and provide feedback to us about these services. Not everyone is able to do this in the same way, so we need to make sure a range of options are available.

Success would be:

- Residents and other service users can easily access information about Council services via a range of channels
- Residents and other service users can access the Council services that they need in a straightforward manner
- Residents and other service users are easily able to provide views, comments and feedback about Council proposals and services

Our activity in this area will focus on:

- Better understanding the nature of our customer contact
- Making sure services and information are accessible for those with protected characteristics

Equality Objective 4: Working for the council

Continue to seek opportunities to build inclusivity into the Council's internal policies and procedures

Why is this important?

We think it is important to lead by example. The Council is committed to being an inclusive organisation providing equal opportunities for all those who work here

Success would be:

- Staff, elected members and council contractors are aware of, and actively uphold, the Equality Duty and their equalities responsibilities
- Those working at the Council, or applying to work at the Council, are treated fairly and equally
- Equality considerations are clearly presented as part of the Council's formal decision-making process

Our activity in this area will focus on:

- Reviewing - and as necessary updating - relevant internal policies and procedures
- Reviewing - and as necessary updating - resources and training for staff, and member learning and development resources, in relation to equalities issues.