

SERVICES for ALL GROUP

Terms of Reference

Aim/Purpose

- To ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and reduce any potential risk to the Councils.
- To ensure that the Councils understand the impact that their services have on their citizens with particular regard to minority groups (protected Characteristics). Minimise any negative impacts wherever possible to promote access to services for all.
- To promote access to services for all citizens, communities and visitors.
- To ensure that issues relating to community cohesion, equality and diversity are addressed on a corporate basis.
- To ensure that 'safeguarding' is included and addressed by the Services for All group as part of its remit. To adopt a leading role for both Councils in ensuring that they meet their duties under the equality Act 2010.

Objectives

- Ensure through the understanding of its elected members and officers that both Councils meet their duties and responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 – Public Sector Duty and have due regard to:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups.
 - Foster good relationships between people from different groups.
- To ensure that issues preventing access to services by each of the protected characteristics are identified through consultation and conversations, understood and wherever possible acted upon.
- Promote links, consultation, conversations, improved understanding and good relationships through fully represented community partnerships:
 - WDC – Waveney Community Cohesion Partnership
 - SCDC – Suffolk Coastal Resource Network.
- Embed the Equality Impact Analysis (EIA) process to ensure that the effects of decisions taken and their impact on protected characteristics is understood and considered to inform the decision making process.
- To present progress reports to respective Cabinets and when key decisions are required.
- Identify 'safeguarding' issues to be addressed through the Services for All group and promote delivery of the corresponding Action Plan.

Membership

- Portfolio Holders - WDC Portfolio Holder for Customers & Communities.
SCDC Portfolio Holder for Customers & Communities

- Lead Officer – Principal Service Manager (Community Development & Performance).
- Responsible Officers to represent the following services:
 - Human Resources
 - Democratic Services
 - Customer Services
 - Housing
 - CES
 - Environmental Services
 - Communications
 - Revenues and Benefits
 - Planning Services
- Assistant Chief Executive
- Head of Community & Economic Services as required to address particular issues or for particular agenda items.
- Invited representatives from VCS, Community groups and organisations as required to address particular issues or for particular agenda items.
- Other officers and members to attend all, or part of any meeting as required to address particular issues or for particular agenda items.

Deputies

- The Chairman, lead officer, and responsible officers for each service area should each have appointed deputies.

Meetings

- Held initially on a monthly basis to accelerate the delivery of the Aims and Objectives, moving to quarterly meetings at an agreed appropriate juncture.
- Draft agenda items to be forwarded to the Principal Service Manager (Community Development & Performance) one week prior to the scheduled meeting.
- Principal Service Manager (Community Development & Performance) to distribute agenda one week prior to the scheduled meeting.
- Standing agenda items to include:
 - Apologies and substitutes
 - Approval of previous notes
 - Actions from previous notes
 - Action Plan update
 - Safeguarding update
 - Date of next meeting
- Meeting venue to alternate between WDC offices and SCDC offices.
- Video conferencing to be adopted when practicable to do so and intermediate meeting venues adopted e.g. Halesworth.
- Notes to be taken and distributed within one week after each meeting.

Accountability

- The Services for All group will provide reports to the Corporate Governance meetings and to the respective Cabinets of each Council as required.

Quorum

- Minimum of five members of the Services for All group including Portfolio Holder, Lead Officer or deputies.

Chairman

- Portfolio Holder for Customers & Communities, alternated between WDC and SCDC members with video conferencing facility adopted whenever possible and mid-way meeting venue e.g. Halesworth.

Lead Officer

- Principal Service Manager (Community Development & Performance).

Secretariat

- Consider availability of secretariat support.

Amendments to Terms of Reference

- Proposed amendments circulated to group members one week prior to the meeting. Chairman, Lead Officer (or deputies) and three members of the group to be in attendance.

Roles and Responsibilities of Group members

- Chairman
 - To Lead the Services for All meetings.
 - To oversee the compliance with Equality & Diversity requirements across both Councils, through it's members and officers.
 - Present regular progress Reports to respective Cabinets.
 - To provide member perspective links between the Services for All group and members.
- Lead Officer
 - To ensure the group is up to date with the Equalities Act 2010 requirements, current issues and initiatives.
 - Provide annual training and equality updates to members and officers across both Councils.

- Maintain the Services for All Action Plan.
 - Ensure the Action Plan reflects relevant Key Line of Enquiry (KLOE) standards and best practice.
 - To promote the sharing of best practice across both Councils and learning from outside partners and organisations.
 - Present regular progress reports to the Corporate Governance group and respective Cabinets as required.
- Assistant Chief Executive
 - Provide SMT, high level support and drive to ensure that the equality agenda is driven and embedded across both Councils as a priority issue.
- Responsible Officers
 - Ensure equality compliance across service areas through the sharing and cascading of learning, actions and activity.
 - Embed EIA processes and procedures within their service teams.
 - Facilitate and implement agreed actions of the Services for All group.
 - Elevate service related issues to the Services for All group for consideration, learning, action and address.
 - Lead equality reviews across their service areas.
 - Reflect the outcomes of those reviews in corresponding action plans and service plans.
 - Cascade and coach teams in terms of understanding equalities requirements and the work of the Services for All group. Identify issues and any gaps and address through service plans, one to one's etc.
 - Provide regular 'Safeguarding' updates to S4A group at each meeting (Human Resources team).