

## **Equalities Impact Assessment. Draft Corporate Plan 2016-2020**

### **1. Within the aims and objectives of the policy or strategy which group(s) of people has been identified as being potentially disadvantaged by your proposals? What are the equality impacts?**

The Corporate Plan is the City Council's key strategic document. This Corporate Plan updates and takes forward the themes in the plan for 2015-2019 that were agreed by Council in February 2015. It sets the strategic direction of the Council for the next four years.

The Plan is subject to Section 149 general Equality Duty for the public sector under the Equality Act 2010, where public bodies must specifically show due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The protected characteristics covered by the Equality Duty are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership  
(Note: only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality)
- Religion or belief (including the lack of belief)
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

In addition, the Council has the following equalities considerations:

- Safeguarding/ welfare of children and vulnerable adults
- Mental wellbeing/ community resilience

Oxford City is a culturally and ethnically diverse city and there are significant challenges in reducing inequality in the city :

- Pockets of deprivation exist across the city. The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 places Oxford in the top half of the most deprived local authority areas in England. 10 areas, in the south and east of the city, are among the 20% most deprived areas in England. These areas experience multiple levels of deprivation - low skills, low incomes and relatively high levels of crime. People from these areas can expect to live on average six years less than those in the more affluent areas.

- While 43% of Oxford residents have degree-level qualifications or above, 22% have low or no qualifications at all.
- In 2011, 32% of the population was aged between 18 and 29 years (compared to a UK average of 16%), and the city has the youngest median age – 29.9 years – of any place in England & Wales.
- Although Oxford is prosperous in many ways, 12 of its 85 'Super Output Areas' are among the 20% most deprived areas in England. Over one-fifth of Oxford's children – 6,000 – live in poverty.
- Oxford experienced population growth of 12% over the decade 2004 to 2014.
- Oxford is a world-renowned education centre and over two-fifths (43%) of its adult residents have a university degree (2011 Census data), while 22% of no or low qualifications.
- At the 2011 Census, 24% of the city's adult population were full-time students (30,000 people) – the highest proportion in England and Wales. 31,900 students studied full time at the two universities in 2012/13 (HESA time series).
- Oxford is an ethnically diverse city, and it is also internationally diverse. 22% of residents were from a black or minority ethnic group in 2011, compared to 13% in England. An additional 14% of residents were from a white but non-British ethnic background.
- There is huge demand for housing, which contributes to Oxford being the least affordable place to live in the UK (according to the Centre for Cities 2014). Even at the lower end of the market, house prices are ten times average earnings. 28% of households rent their home at prices which are the most expensive outside London.
- There are over 3,300 people on The City Council's Housing Register.

The Corporate Plan 2016-2020 sets out the ways in which the Council will build upon its existing work programmes in order to address these and other challenges. It reinforces and will be supported by the [Council's 2012-2015 Corporate Equality Scheme](#).

The Corporate Plan sets out the ongoing ambition of the Council to reduce the extent of inequality and to improve the lives of the most vulnerable members of our community. It sets out a firm commitment to:

- Increasing prosperity and economic opportunity in the city which will benefit all residents
- ensure that services are fully accessible to all community groups
- ensure that work programmes are scoped to continue to target and protect the most vulnerable people in our communities

recognise that people need different levels of support and services depending on their circumstances

- promote new opportunities for people living in the more deprived

communities of our city, particularly through its programmes to increase apprenticeships, training and employment opportunities, especially for young people.

**2. In brief, what changes are you planning to make to your current or proposed new or changed policy, strategy, procedure, project or service to minimise or eliminate the adverse equality impacts?**

**Please provide further details of the proposed actions, timetable for making the changes and the person(s) responsible for making the changes on the resultant action plan.**

The Plan continues to have five key priorities:

- A vibrant and sustainable economy
- Meeting housing needs
- Strong and active communities
- Clean and Green Oxford
- An efficient and effective Council

The Corporate Plan recognises that to achieve the outcomes the council will need to work closely with partners including other councils, public agencies, business and voluntary and community organisations. The plan therefore includes two cross cutting priorities focusing on partnership and working collaboratively for devolution of funding and decision making to the local area.

The councils objectives, areas of focus, action and outcomes are set out in the Corporate Plan. The respective actions noted are embedded within annual service planning and performance is monitored through directorate meetings, wider leadership team, performance boards, scrutiny committee and City Executive Board.

The Corporate Plan has specific actions around providing opportunities for young people. The differential impact resulting from providing new opportunities reflects the need to engage more effectively, tackle social inclusion and address (as far as possible) employment through apprenticeships and other initiatives. The Council will also address issues around social marginalisation and anti-social behaviour in order to have a positive impact on the fabric of neighbourhoods.

The Corporate Plan has comprehensive actions around increasing the number of affordable homes within the city (either through rental, low cost or social housing provision). This will directly help those who are otherwise unable to secure decent housing at an affordable cost.

The Corporate Plan acknowledges that in order to deliver on its strategic objectives the City Council will need to play an influencing role through its partnership working. In the context of our equality ambitions this is particularly relevant, with the Safer Communities Partnership and the Stronger Communities

Board being of particular relevance.

**3. Please provide details of whom you will consult on the proposed changes and if you do not plan to consult, please provide the rationale behind that decision.**

**Please note that you are required to involve disabled people in decisions that impact on them.**

Consultation on the draft Corporate Plan 2016 – 2020 and draft Budget 2016-2020 will take place between 24th December 2015 and 24th January 2016. Organisations and the general public will be invited to respond through our consultation portal.

In addition to consultation on the draft Corporate Plan, consultation and research is carried on throughout the year as a routine part of developing policies, strategies and plans. This includes many of the significant housing investment/ regeneration projects where consultation has influenced design and spending issues.

**4. Can the adverse impacts you identified during the initial screening be justified without making any adjustments to the existing or new policy, strategy, procedure, project or service?**

**Please set out the basis on which you justify making no adjustments.**

The changes made to the Corporate Plan as part of the review process strengthen and enhance the Council's commitment to maintaining the quality and access to its services.

Key themes in this year's plan include:

- Investment in new affordable homes will help key workers, those on low incomes and the most vulnerable find a home that they can afford and meets their needs
- Our communities, especially vulnerable and at-risk groups, will be protected from crime and anti-social behaviour.
- All residents will have the opportunity to participate in high quality community, leisure and cultural activities that improve health and quality of life and enable them to fulfil their potential.
- Our diverse communities will benefit from high quality, safe neighbourhoods and good local services, with support targeted to reflect differing levels of need and deprivation across the city.
- Young people in Oxford will have a positive transition to adulthood through good education, skills training and opportunities for work and leisure.

- Council tenants will benefit from high quality, energy efficient homes in good quality environments.
- People renting their home from a private landlord in Oxford will know that their home will be well maintained, safe and free from overcrowding.
- There will be fewer rough sleepers and homeless people, and families will get appropriate accommodation and support to get back on their feet
- Inequality will be reduced by providing low income households with support to maximise their income.

This section will be updated when more details from the Medium Term Financial Plan are available.

**5. You are legally required to monitor and review the proposed changes after implementation to check they work as planned and to screen for unexpected equality impacts.**

**Please provide details of how you will monitor/evaluate or review your proposals and when the review will take place.**

The Corporate Plan is reviewed and updated on an annual basis. Progress on implementing the projects and work-streams will be monitored on a monthly basis through team meetings, directorate-wide meetings, programme boards, and Directors' meetings. Progress is reported to the City Executive Board on a quarterly basis.

Lead officer responsible for signing off the EqIA: Sadie Paige  
 Role: Policy Officer , Assistant Chief Executive  
 Date: 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015.

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