



Corporate Governance Service

Annual Equality Statement 2018

Table of Contents

| | | |
|----|---|----|
| 1 | Introduction..... | 3 |
| 2 | The Equality Act | 3 |
| 3 | Our Corporate Vision and Priorities | 4 |
| 4 | Service Delivery | 5 |
| 5 | Training and Development..... | 5 |
| 6 | Our Equality Objectives 2018-2019 | 6 |
| 7 | Examples of Good Practice | 7 |
| 8 | Profile of West Lindsey District | 9 |
| 9 | West Lindsey Citizens' Panel..... | 10 |
| 10 | Staff breakdown..... | 12 |

1 Introduction

Welcome to West Lindsey District Council's Annual Equality Statement.

This Council promotes equality of opportunity in all of its functions. Our commitment to equalities is about long-term, continuous improvement. It is the responsibility of all officers and elected Members to implement the principles of equality and to ensure that these principles inform decision-making at every level within the Council

We continue to work towards mainstreaming issues of equality into service delivery, employment and procurement for all aspects of our work. We are committed to providing equal access to services and employment for all people living, working and visiting the district.

2 The Equality Act

As a local authority the Council has a responsibility to meet the Equality Duty which is set by law as part of the Equality Act 2010. The duty gives protection for all persons who might be discriminated against because of their age, race, sex, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership. These 9 areas of protection are called the protected characteristics.

The duty requires us have **due regard** to the need 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 specific duties placed on public bodies are to:

- Publish information to show our compliance with the Equality Duty – including information relating to employees who share protected characteristics and information relating to our service users
- Set and publish equality objectives, at least every four years

3 Our Corporate Vision and Priorities

The council carried out a review of its priorities for 2016-2020 taking into account all the evidence we have including national and regional priorities and local views and taking into account what our residents consider important.

Here are the things we can see a greater focus on:

- Open for Business - Our priorities are:
 - To attract inward investment.
 - To retain, support and facilitate the growth of business in the district.
 - Housing led economic growth.
 - Understand and address the skills gap in the district.
 - Promote and expand the agri-food sector.
 - Understand and promote the value of the visitor economy.
- People First – Our priorities are:
 - Ease and convenience of access to a range of public services offered by the Council and partner organisations.
 - Enhance and maintain a safe, natural and built environment.
 - Meet local housing needs and aspirations.
 - Increase opportunities for arts, culture, night-time economy, sport and leisure for residents.
- Asset Management - Our priorities are:
 - To develop and maximise the return on, and value of, our land and property.
 - Maximise the benefits of our assets for our communities.
 - Utilise our land and property to facilitate inward investment.
- Partnership/Devolution - Our priorities are:
 - Work in partnership to explore opportunities to deliver improvements across a range of issues.
 - Work with national and regional organisations to deliver services locally.
 - Build successful commercial partnerships and joint ventures.
 - Deliver local services at a local level.
- Central Lincolnshire Local Plan - Our priorities are:
 - Ensure Local Plan is adopted.
 - Establish an appropriate number of neighbourhood plans across the district, ensuring they are supported.
 - Identify key growth and regeneration priorities for Gainsborough and align with Local Plan.
 - Develop infrastructure that meets housing and growth priorities for the district.
- Excellent Value for Money Services - Our priorities are:
 - Explore alternative delivery models to ensure effective use of resources.
 - Put our customers first.
 - Develop high skilled, motivated staff to deliver in an entrepreneurial manner.
 - To be a high performing council at a cost affordable to residents of the district.

All of these priorities and much more are contained in our Corporate Plan 2016-2020 which maps out where we want to make improvements, what success would look like and how we will monitor progress.

Our Corporate Plan 2016-2020 can be found at <https://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/corporateplan>

4 Service Delivery

The Equality Duty requires public bodies to consider how the decisions they make and the services they deliver affect people who share different protected characteristics.

We have a process for analysis of equality impact for our policies and procedures and has been undertaken for many years. Analysis begins prior to the introduction of, or change to, any policy or procedure. Officers assess at this very early stage the impact our decisions could have on the people we serve. We look for both positive and potential negative outcomes relating to the introduction of policies. If negatives are highlighted we look to remove them if possible and mitigate their impact if they remain.

We recognise that the impact our policies and procedures have on people is not always defined because of a single protected characteristic. The need to look at a person as a whole, rather than component parts, is imperative when applying fairness to systems and decision making.

Equality Analyses are taken into account throughout our overview, decision making and scrutiny processes by our Members to ensure that their decisions are fair and equitable for the diverse communities they have been elected to serve.

As a provider of services we make sure that the information we produce is clear, understandable and accessible. We treat people with respect at all times ensuring that we are aware of, and acknowledge, their human rights.

5 Training and Development

Our existing staff and all new starters are required to undergo a basic equality awareness raising session through an internal training system. All managers will undertake Equality Impact Assessment training during 2018.

6 Our Equality Objectives 2018-2019

| Objective | How will we achieve this? |
|---|--|
| Review Corporate Plan and Equality objectives to ensure links are clear and objectives are evidence based | Work with Members to identify achievements against current priorities and identify any new or emerging issues. |
| Ensure that all our staff, elected members and volunteers are aware of our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty | Provide e learning awareness raising opportunity for all staff and Equality Impact Assessment training for relevant staff. Existing staff and elected members have refresher training undertaken every 2 years or earlier if required due to legislative changes |
| Engage our communities to participate in the determination of our priorities and decision making | Through the involvement of our Citizens Panel using both paper and online versions and through consultation events throughout the district |
| Ensure we are transparent in decision making | All equality impact assessments, committee reports and consultation reports are placed on the website and are available if requested in other formats. |

7 Examples of Good Practice

We are keen to show that we consider the needs of our residents when providing both statutory and discretionary services. The following examples are a snapshot of our commitment to having due regard for equality not only through analysis of the impact of new and updated policies but throughout all levels of service delivery and facilitation.

Citizen Panel

We actively engage with our Citizen Panel which has more than 1,200 members.

Assisted Collections

Help is available to households where the occupants are unable to place their bin at the property boundary

Translations

Language line is available for staff to use if a customer requires a translation service.

Mentoring in schools

Help is available to households where the occupants are unable to place their bin at the property boundary

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)

WLDC can provide a grant to adapt a resident's home if they are disabled and the work would be essential for the resident to remain living independently in their home

Alternative formats

Documents are available in alternative formats such as Braille, large print or audio on request.

Neighbourhood Plans

WLDC provide support and advice to Parish Councils who are planning for future housing growth in their village through a neighbourhood plan and also want to ensure that this does not cause unnecessary harm to the character of their village and its surrounding countryside

Youth Council

WLDC can provide a forum for schools to hold their youth council in the Chamber, which is run as if a full council meeting and presided over by the Chairman. This gives the young people the chance to see and experience how local democracy works

8 Profile of West Lindsey District

Our District

The West Lindsey district is one of the largest in England and one of the most rural in the County of Lincolnshire in the East Midlands Region. One of seven District areas in the County, West Lindsey includes villages to the north of the City of Lincoln, following the route of the River Trent and the Nottinghamshire border to the West, bordering North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire, the east coast district of East Lindsey, and North Kesteven to the south.

The District covers 1,156km² (446 square miles), with the administrative centre in Gainsborough on the River Trent to the west, and the market towns of Caistor and Market Rasen to the east.

The district currently has 20 wards and is made up of 97 parishes, of which 72 have parish councils and 19 smaller ones who have parish meetings. One of the main features of the district is that the population is spread across a large area. The mid-year estimates for 2016 give the district a population of 93,734 at a density of 81.11 people/km².

There were 40,704 households in the district in 2017. This ranges from Gainsborough, the principal and administrative town with over 9,200 households, to the small towns of Market Rasen and Caistor that are smaller than some of the district's villages such as Saxilby that has over 1,800 households.

Our Communities

The proportion of ethnic minority residents in West Lindsey was around 3.6% as of 2011, but this is not identical everywhere. Concentration tends to occur in Gainsborough South-West (8.2%) and Sudbrooke (6.9%).

Amongst ethnic minorities, those classified as Other White, White Irish and Indian comprise the largest groups. There is, however, some variation by age within each of these groups; those classified Other White make up 2.07% of those aged 25-44 compared to 1.18% overall; those classified as White Irish make up 0.89% of those aged 65-84 but only 0.08% of 0-9 year olds; and those classified as Indian make up 0.00% of those over 85 but 0.75% of 25-44 year olds and 0.81% of 0-9 years.

Those of mixed ethnicity comprise 0.71% of the population, but this rises from 0.19% of those 65 to over to 1.80% of those aged 0-9.

Further information on the district can be found in the West Lindsey State of the District on our website at <https://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/my-business/growth-and-regeneration/state-of-the-district/>

9 West Lindsey Citizens' Panel

The Citizens' Panel was set up in 2008 to involve the citizens of West Lindsey in the development of Council priorities, policies, and services.

The Council has made a commitment to improving services and quality of life for people who live in the District. To do this the Council needs up-to-date information about the views of local people and one of the ways it does this is via its Citizens' Panel. The Panel is made up of West Lindsey District residents who agree to give their opinions to the Council, in order to help shape and improve the services the Council provides. It is an important initiative for the Council, acting as a touchstone of residents' needs and opinions on public services.

To date, panel members have had their say on issues as wide ranging as recycling services, council tax, health services, housing and community safety.

The panel has 1435 members and are the demographics of the panel as at the 9 April 2018 with 59.4% of those being contacted electronically and 40.6% being contacted via post.

| | | Total % | Postal % | Electronic % |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---------|----------|--------------|
| Gender | Male | 50.0% | 46.5% | 52.5% |
| | Female | 50.0% | 53.5% | 47.5% |
| Area of District | Caistor and surrounding villages | 10.5% | 11.1% | 10.1% |
| | Fosdyke | 24.4% | 11.1% | 26.6% |
| | Gainsborough | 9.8% | 13.4% | 7.4% |
| | Market Rasen and surrounding | 16.0% | 14.8% | 16.9% |
| | Trent | 11.4% | 12.0% | 10.9% |
| | Witham | 27.8% | 27.6% | 27.9% |
| Age | 16-25 | 1.5% | 1.4% | 1.5% |
| | 26-35 | 4.5% | 4.1% | 4.8% |
| | 36-45 | 12.0% | 13.2% | 11.2% |
| | 46-55 | 22.7% | 19.9% | 24.6% |
| | 56-65 | 35.1% | 36.0% | 34.5% |
| | 66-75 | 17.8% | 16.5% | 18.8% |
| | 76 and over | 5.6% | 8.1% | 4.0% |

| | | | | |
|--|-------------------|------|------|------|
| | Prefer not to say | 0.7% | 0.9% | 0.6% |
|--|-------------------|------|------|------|

| | | Total % | Postal % | Electronic % |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|---------|----------|--------------|
| Marital Status | Married/living with partner | 79.7% | 75.3% | 82.7% |
| | Single | 20.0% | 24.5% | 16.9% |
| | Prefer not to say | 0.3% | 0.2% | 0.4% |
| Disability | Disabled | 16.5% | 23.8% | 11.5% |
| | Not disabled or not stated | 83.5% | 76.2% | 88.5% |
| Education | GCSE or equivalent or above | 82.2% | 76.7% | 86.0% |
| | No formal education or not stated | 17.8% | 23.3% | 14.0% |
| Employment | Full time education or employment | 51.8% | 49.2% | 53.6% |
| | Other or not stated | 48.2% | 50.8% | 46.4% |
| Religion | Christian | 66.3% | 68.3% | 65.0% |
| | Prefer not to say or no religion | 32.1% | 30.5% | 32.7% |
| | Other | 1.6% | 1.2% | 2.2% |
| Sexual | Heterosexual | 86.9% | 83.4% | 89.3% |
| | Gay/Lesbian | 0.8% | 0.9% | 0.8% |
| | Other or prefer not to say | 12.3% | 15.8% | 9.9% |
| Ethnicity | White | 97.3% | 97.3% | 97.1% |
| | Other | 1.5% | 1.4% | 1.9% |
| | Prefer not to say | 1.2% | 1.4% | 1.1% |

Further details on the West Lindsey Citizen Panel can be found on the website at www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/citizenpanel

10 Staff breakdown

Details about working for West Lindsey can be found on the website under the page <https://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/my-council/jobs/working-for-wldc/> this includes details on the gender pay gap.



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