

## Harborough District Council Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment is an on-going proactive process which requires us to consider the effect our decisions are likely to have on local communities, service users and employees, particularly those most vulnerable and at risk of disadvantage.

This document has been designed to assist in the collation of information and evidence required to support the ‘Due Regard’ process when introducing new policies/procedures/functions and services or reviewing existing ones.

**Name of policy/procedure/function/service being assessed:** Equality Plan 2025/28 (our Equality Strategy Document)

**Department and section:** Human Resources

**Name of lead officer:** Julie Clarke, Equality and Diversity Officer

**Other people involved (assisting or reviewing – including any service users or stakeholder groups etc.):** Harborough District Council Corporate Equality and Safeguarding Group, LeicesterShire Equalities Forum

**Date assessment commenced:** 18<sup>th</sup> June 2024

**Date assessment submitted for sign off:** 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024

### Step 1: Defining the policy/procedure/function/service

Is this a new, amended, or reviewed policy? What are the aims, objectives and purpose and how will they be achieved? What are the main activities and which communities are likely to be affected by these activities? What are the expected outcomes?

This is a review of our previous 3-year plan (strategy). The aim is to ensure that we are making continuous improvement regarding designing and delivering services that are appropriate and accessible to all sectors of our community and that people from different groups are not discriminated against nor disadvantaged by our actions. The Plan is also aimed at ensuring our employees are treated fairly.

### Step 2: Data collection & evidence

What relevant evidence, research, data, and other information do you have and is there any further research, data, or evidence you need to fill any gaps in your understanding of the potential or known effects of the policy on different communities? Include quantitative data as well as qualitative intelligence such as community input and advice.

**General Harborough District Census Data 2021** (Data from initial releases so may be unrounded)

**Total Population:** 97,631 **Total number of households:** 40,400

#### Household Composition

One person household aged 65 and over	5,335 (13.2%)
One person household other	5,179 (12.8%)
Lone parent household with dependent children	2,066 (5.1%)

<b>Age</b>		
Census Question: What is your date of birth?	Number of residents	% of Harborough District population
All usual residents:	97,631	100.0%
Aged 0-4 years	4,719	4.8%
Aged 5-9 years	5,371	5.5%
Aged 10-15 years	7,106	7.3%
Aged 16-19 years	4,200	4.3%
Aged 20-24 years	4,344	4.4%
Aged 25-34 years	10,487	10.7%
Aged 35-49 years	18,336	18.8%
Aged 50-64 years	21,570	22.1%
Aged 65-74 years	11,429	11.7%
Aged 75-84 years	7,336	7.5%
Aged 85 years and over	2,733	2.8%

### **Ethnic Group**

Census Question: What is your ethnic group?	Number of residents	% of Harborough District population
All usual residents:	97,623	100.0%
Asian/Asian British:	5,298	5.4%
Black/Black British/Caribbean/African:	699	0.7%
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups:	2,003	2.1%
White:	88,851	91.0%
Other ethnic group	205	0.24%

Population by residents born in the UK: Harborough 92.8%

### **Household Language**

All adults in household have English as a main language	39,029 (96.6%)
At least 1 but not all adults in household have English as main language	721 (1.8%)
No adults but at least 1 person aged 3 to 15 has English as main language	143 (0.4%)
No people in household have English as a main language	520 (1.3%)

### **Main Language: Top 10**

English	92,200 residents
Gujarati	363 residents

Panjabi	335 residents
Polish	307 residents
Romanian	222 residents
Portuguese	99 residents
Spanish	92 residents
Hungarian	72 residents
Greek	56 residents

Sign Language, 23 residents (British Sign Language, 16 residents)

As the Census took place in 2021 the above figures do not recognise the increase in Ukrainian and Russian main language speakers residing within the district due to the Ukrainian Family and Homes for Ukraine Schemes implemented in 2022. As of 24.09.24 Government statistics show that there have been 313 arrivals within the district for people issued visas via the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship scheme. These residents will use either Ukrainian or Russian as their main language.

**Sex**

Census Question: What is your sex?

	Number of residents	% of Harborough District population
All usual residents:	97,625	100.0%
Female	49,276	50.5%
Male	48,349	49.5%

**Gender Identity**

Census Question: Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?

	Number of residents	% of Harborough District population
All usual residents aged 16 and over	80,430	100.0%
Gender identity the same as registered at birth	76,560	95.2%
Gender identity different from sex registered at birth but no specific identity given	69	0.1%
Trans woman	44	0.1%
Trans man	40	0.0%
Non-binary	24	0.0%
All other gender identities	15	0.0%
Not answered	3,678	4.6%

**Health**

Census Question: Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

	Number of residents	% of Harborough District population
Day to day activities limited a lot	5296	5.4%
Day to day activities limited a little	9413	9.6%
Day to day activities not limited	82917	84.9%

**Legal Partnership Status**

Census Question: What is your legal marital or same-sex civil partnership status?

	Number of residents	% of Harborough District population
All usual residents aged 16 and over:	80,428	100.0%
Never Married or registered a Civil Partnership	23,779	29.6%
Married or in a registered Civil Partnership	42,622	53.0%
Separated/Divorced or formerly in a Civil Partnership	8,889	11.0%
Widowed or surviving Civil Partnership partner	5,138	6.4%

**Religious Belief**

Census Question: What is your religion?

	Number of residents	% of Harborough District population
All usual residents:	97,624	100.0%
Buddhist	256	0.3%
Christian	49,046	50.2%
Hindu	2,477	2.5%
Jewish	118	0.1%
Muslim	1,120	1.1%
Sikh	1,467	1.5%
Other religion	379	0.4%
No religion	37,480	38.4%
Religion not stated	5,281	5.4%

**Sexual Orientation**

Census Question: Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

	Number of residents	% of Harborough District population
All usual residents aged 16 and over	80,427	100.0%
Heterosexual or Straight	73,899	91.9%
Gay or Lesbian	923	1.1%
Bisexual	620	0.8%

Pansexual	90	0.1%
Asexual	36	0.0%
Queer	8	0.0%
All other sexual orientations	6	0.0%
Not answered	4,845	6.0%

**Households not deprived in any dimension:** Harborough 57.9%

**Population who have previously served in any UK armed services:** 3,145 residents (3.9%)

### **Needs Assessment for Harborough, Health and Wellbeing Plan, November 2023**

**Age and health** - 22% of the population of Harborough are 65 and over; this is higher than the average for England (18.4%) and the Leicestershire population (20.5%). Alongside most areas in England, population estimates show an ageing population in the area with increases of 51% in the size of the over 65 population by 2040. As a result, we can expect to see an increase in many of the health conditions associated with ageing, at a faster rate than in other Districts. According to the 2021 Census, Harborough is one of the places that has seen the largest increase in the population aged 65 years and over since 2011, at 38.5%.

**Childhood Poverty** – There are 2140 children living in relative low-income families in the district in Financial Year End 2022 (note these are provisional figures) this is 12.4% of the child population and an increase of 625 (3.7%) from the previous financial year. There are 1810 living in absolute low income families in the same year, 10.5% of the child population. This is an increase of 579 (3.4%) from the previous financial year.

**Income Deprivation Affecting Older People** – Market Harborough Central has significantly higher numbers of older people living in poverty when compared with Leicestershire and England. The Leicestershire Health Inequalities Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Highlights Market Harborough Central as having 44.8% people living alone, which is significantly higher than the England average.

### **[Leicestershire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Health Inequalities, 2023](#)**

Evidence exists that show the population groups below are losing years of life as a result of health inequalities:

- People who have a learning disability (20.7 years lost)
- Looked after children or care experienced people (360% higher risk of premature death)
- People who are homeless (around 30 years lower)
- People living in poverty or deprivation (9.7 years for men and 7.9 years for women in England)
- Gypsy or Irish Travellers (life expectancy of 10 years lower)
- People who are in prison (mortality rate for prisoners is 50% higher)
- People with a Severe Mental Illness (15-20 years lower life expectancy than the general population)

**Workforce Equality Statistics 2024 (from self-declaration on human resources system)**

**Age** – 6% of our employees are aged under 24 years, 11% are aged 25-34 years, 41% are aged 35-49 years, 41% aged 50-64 years and 2% of employees are aged 65 years or over.

**Ethnic group** - Of the 49% of staff declaring their ethnic group, 97% said that they are white and 2% described themselves as Asian, Black, Mixed or 'Other' ethnic group.

**Gender Reassignment** – Of the 39% of employees who self-reported, 100% indicated their gender is the same as that assigned at birth.

**Health condition or disability** – Only 4% of employees completed this question and 100% declared that they do not have a health condition or disability which limits their day-to-day activities and has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months. We are trying to establish why the response rate was so low and believe that employees may have missed this question due to software design rather than choosing not to answer. We know that we have employees who have long term health conditions and disabilities and make reasonable adjustments where possible.

**Religion or Belief** – Of the 43% of our employees who answered, 51% declared themselves to be Christian, 38% employees stated that they have no religion and 6% stated that they are Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh or 'other'. 2% of staff selected that they did not wish to declare their religion and 57% left this question blank.

**Sex** –70% of our staff are female and 30% male. This is comparable to other Local Authorities and public sector organisations. The figure is impacted by the number of part time positions at the council. Office of National Statistics UK Labour Force data for January to March 2024 showed that, nationally, 37% of women in employment worked part time compared to 14% of men. 34% of positions at this council are part time roles and 92% of these are held by female employees. The position is more even when looking at full time roles, with 59% of positions being held by female employees and 41% by male. There is a similar split when looking at management positions (Grade 10 and above) where there are 58% female and 42% male employees. 5% of Grade 10 and above positions are part time roles.

**Sexual orientation** – Of the 41% of employees who completed this section, 89% of respondents described themselves as heterosexual/straight and 11% as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or 'other'.

**Recruitment Equality Statistics 2023/24**

During the period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024, 573 people applied for jobs with Harborough District Council, 62 people were interviewed and 61 offered posts. From information completed at the time of recruitment:

**Age** – 11% of new starters were aged under 24years, 11% were 25-29years, 41% aged 30-44years, 34% aged 45-59years and 2% aged 60 or over.

**Ethnic origin** – 79% were White, 21% Asian, Black, Mixed or 'Other' ethnic group.

**Gender Reassignment** - 97% of new starters stated that the gender they identify with is the same as that assigned at birth.

**Health condition or disability** – 92% of new starters declared that they did not have a health condition or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months, 7% said that they do have and 2% preferred not to say.

**Religion or Belief** – 34% of new starters were Christian, 39% had no religion, 15% were Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh or 'other' and 12% did not wish to declare.

**Sex** – 69% were female, 28% male and 3% of new starters described their sex in another way.

**Sexual Orientation** – 84% of new starters declared that they were heterosexual/straight, 7% described their sexuality as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or ‘other’ and 10% of new starters preferred not to say.

### **Harborough District Hate Incident and Offences Statistics**

Within Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland reported hate incidents and hate crimes are recorded against five categories (Disability, Gender identity, Race, Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation) as well as a category for ‘any other perceived difference’ to align with Leicestershire Police recording of hate. Latest statistics from dashboards created by the Hate Incident Monitoring Project provide the following statistics for Hate reports within the Harborough District for the rolling 12-month period up to March 2024:

Number of hate reports recorded in Harborough district – 147 (which is an increase of 36.1% on the previous year’s figure of 108 reports)  
Breakdown of reports by category: Race 58.9%, Sexual Orientation 18.2%, Disability 14.0%, Religious 6.2% and Gender Identity 1.4%

Further information regarding Hate Incidents in Harborough can be located on the [Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Hate Incident Monitoring Project Dashboard](#) or by viewing information on the Community Safety page of our website [Hate | Hate, Prevent and Exploitation | Harborough District Council](#)

### **Step 3: Consultation and involvement**

Have you consulted and if so, outline what you did and who you consulted with and why.

As part of the formulation of the Plan, the following groups have been/will be asked for feedback:

External - Harborough Action Team, Freedom Support Solutions, LeicesterShire Equalities Forum, Leicester LGBT Centre, Harborough District Disability Action Group, Harborough Churches Together, HCYC – Harborough District Children and Young People’s Charity, MATU – Multi-Agency Traveller Unit, VASL – Voluntary Action South Leicestershire, Homestart South Leicestershire

Internal – Corporate Management Team, Heads of Service, Corporate Equality and Safeguarding Group, Cabinet Lead, Equality Member Champion and Corporate and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Panel

### **Step 4: Potential impact**

Considering the evidence from the data collection and feedback from consultation, which communities will be affected and what barriers may these individuals or groups face in relation to Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Other groups e.g. rural isolation, deprivation, health inequality, carers, asylum seeker and refugee communities, people who are care experienced, current and ex-armed forces personnel (Veterans), deprived or disadvantaged communities and also the potential impact on Community Cohesion. Remember people have multiple characteristics so the impact of a policy on a particular community may impact people within the community differently. Where possible include numbers likely to be affected.

Work is ongoing at the Council with regards to ensuring that the make-up of our workforce is representative of the community we support. By trying to match the community we aim to employ people with diverse skills, abilities and understanding of various groups and communities to help identify barriers or potential areas of discrimination at the earliest possible opportunity. This combined with the

objectives contained within our Equality Plan 2025/28 should help us to ensure that the only impacts on individuals or groups with protected characteristics are positive ones.

It is important that we recognise that just because some communities are not as substantial in terms of numbers as others within the district, it is just as significant that their voices are heard and that we are able to make certain that their needs are considered and any barriers to access assessed. By completing good quality equality impact assessments, at an early stage, when considering new policies and procedures as well as when reviewing current ones, our staff should be able to identify potential gaps and engage with relevant communities to make certain that we do not make assumptions about impacts but make decisions based on fact.

If we become aware of any negative impact resulting as a consequence of one of our policies or procedures, we will endeavour to find opportunities to mitigate this as soon as practicable.

**Step 5: Mitigating and assessing the impact**

If you consider there to be actual or potential adverse impact or discrimination, please outline this below. State whether it is justifiable or legitimate and give reasons. If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is illegal, you are required to take action to remedy this immediately. If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is justifiable or legitimate, you will need to consider what actions can be taken to mitigate its effect on those groups of people. Consider what barriers you can remove, whether reasonable adjustments may be necessary and how any unmet needs have identified can be addressed.

I do not believe there to be any actual or potential adverse impact or discrimination because of this plan. The plan has been written with the intention of ensuring that our policies, procedures and services are accessible for all. It identifies the importance of ensuring that we consider the additional needs people may have to achieve the same level of access as others and the importance of eliminating barriers preventing people from engaging with us. If we do this then the only impacts should be positive for our residents and employees with protected characteristics.

**Step 6: Making a decision**

Summarise your findings and give an overview of whether the policy will meet Harborough District Council's responsibilities in relation to equality, diversity, and human rights. Does it contribute to the achievement of the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty – eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations?

The Equality Plan 2025/28 is centred on how we are going to meet our responsibilities and what we will do if we become aware of any situation where we are deemed to be lacking in an area. Therefore, I believe that it will contribute to us achieving all three aims of our Public Sector Equality Duty.

**Step 7: Monitoring, evaluation & review of your policy/procedure/service change**

What monitoring systems will you put in place to promote equality of opportunity, monitor impact and effectiveness, and make positive improvements? How frequently will monitoring take place and who will be responsible?



A yearly review will take place. This will monitor progress with regards to equality objectives within the plan. It will also help to identify any gaps and where improvement needs to be made. The review and monitoring will be the responsibility of the Equality and Diversity Officer with support from the Corporate Equality and Safeguarding Group.

### Equality Improvement Plan

#### Equality Objective :

**Action:** Equality Objectives are listed as part of the Equality Plan 2025/28 document itself.

**Officer Responsible:** J.Clarke

**By when:** December 2024

#### Equality Objective :

**Action:**

**Officer Responsible:**

**By when:**

#### Equality Objective :

**Action:**

**Officer Responsible:**

**By when:**

**Signed off by:**



**Date:** 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024

Once signed off, please forward a copy for publication to Julie Clarke, Equality and Diversity Officer e-mail: [j.clarke@harborough.gov.uk](mailto:j.clarke@harborough.gov.uk)