

Equality impact Assessment

Project Information	
Project Name <i>This should clearly explain what service / policy / strategy / change you are assessing</i>	Three Rivers District Council Communications Strategy 2025-2028
Service Area <i>Main team responsible for the policy, practice, service or function being assessed</i>	Customer Experience
EIA Author <i>Name and Job Title</i>	Judy Simpson, Marketing & Campaigns Manager
Date EIA drafted	19 May 2025
ID number <i>This will be added by the Strategy and Partnerships Team</i>	CE001

Executive summary	
Focus of EIA <i>A member of the public should have a good understanding of the policy or service and any proposals after reading this section.</i> <i>Please use plain English and write any acronyms in full first time - eg: 'Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)'</i> <i>This section should explain what you are assessing:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>If the EIA is attached to a report, summarise the report.</i> <i>Provide information on whether any of the following communities could be affected by the policy, practice, service or function, or by how it is delivered?</i> <i>(age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership) in addition, TRDC recognises other communities may be vulnerable to disadvantage, this includes carers, people experiencing domestic abuse, substance misusers, homeless people, looked after children, (ex) armed forces personnel.</i> 	<p>A report on the draft Communication Strategy 2025-2028 for Three Rivers District Council, outlining the strategic approach to communications, the channels utilised, breadth of content produced and audiences targeted.</p> <p>The aim of this strategy is to deliver a first class, effective and efficient communications service for Three Rivers District Council using a multi-channel approach to reach the wide variety of customers and stakeholders we serve, including residents, members, employees, businesses, community partners and visitors to the district.</p> <p>The strategy includes the vision for communications, including clear focus, clear objectives, specific actions and measures impact and outcomes.</p> <p>The strategy outlines the role of communications, the audiences, channels, and structure of the department. It also outlines the progress made at transforming the department and its strategy since 2019, and what the next steps are for continuing what has been establish as a dramatic departure from the processes and approach that came before.</p> <p>The issues and mitigating actions relate to the outputs of the Communications Plan instead of the strategy.</p>

Mitigations		
Protected Characteristic	Potential Issue <i>Against each protected characteristics, make a frank and realistic assessment of what issues may or do occur</i>	Mitigating Actions <i>How can the negative impacts be reduced or avoided by the mitigating measures? Is further engagement with specific communities needed? Is more research or monitoring needed? Does there need to be a change in the proposal itself?</i>
Age	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Older audiences may be less familiar with digital platforms 2. Language or references may be too informal or culturally irrelevant to certain age groups 3. Font size, visual contrast may not accommodate age-related impairments ie vision, hearing 4. Younger audiences may ignore traditional media ie print, email 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use a mix of traditional and digital platforms to reach different age demographics 2. Use clear jargon-free inclusive language that avoids slang or generational references 3. Follow accessibility guidelines and adjust font and contrast where necessary 4. Use of social media and sharing of comms to partners working directly with young people. Ensure imagery and examples include a variety of age groups to promote inclusivity
Disability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Avoid communications that rely on visuals, audio or complex formats that are inaccessible to people with visual, hearing, cognitive or motor impairments 2. Not offering materials in alternative formats ie screen reader friendly 3. Communications may portray people with disabilities in a stereotypical or patronising way 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply accessible standards for all digital content 2. Offer materials in multiple formats ie large print 3. Feature people with disabilities authentically by selecting appropriate imagery and copy 4. Ensure all communications are

	<p>4. Information may lack accessibility details</p>	<p>accessible by design, not as an afterthought</p> <p>Provide options for engagement that removes barriers, not just accommodates them</p>
Gender reassignment (or affirmation)	<p>1. Using incorrect names or pronouns</p> <p>Avoid terms like 'ladies and gentlemen' or binary assumptions which may exclude or erase non-binary and transgender people</p> <p>2. Invasive references to gender reassignment or transition can be offensive and violate privacy</p> <p>3. Absence of inclusive guidelines or visible support ie pronouns in signatures may deter engagement</p>	<p>1. Avoid gendered language and use terms like 'people of all genders' where appropriate</p> <p>2. Ensure systems and databases respect individuals' correct names and pronouns</p> <p>Offer opportunities for people to self-identify</p> <p>3. Train teams on inclusive language, trans awareness and how to avoid microaggressions or assumptions</p>
Pregnancy or maternity	n/a	n/a
Race	<p>1. Communications may feature mostly white or homogeneous imagery and voices, which can marginalize racially diverse audiences</p> <p>2. Messaging may include language, references or tone that is offensive, appropriative, or dismissive of different cultural contexts</p> <p>3. Communications may reinforce harmful racial stereotypes, intentionally or unintentionally, through wording, images or character roles</p> <p>4. Phrasing that assumes a white or Western-centric norm can alienate people from other racial or ethnic backgrounds</p>	<p>1. Use imagery, voices, and stories that reflect racial and ethnic diversity authentically</p> <p>2. Review all communications to identify and eliminate bias, stereotypes, or culturally insensitive references.</p> <p>3. Involve racially diverse stakeholders in message development, review processes, and decision-making.</p> <p>4. Avoid phrases or metaphors with racially charged or colonial histories</p>

	<p>5. Ignoring racial disparities in content, messaging, or strategy can be seen as complicit</p>	<p>5. Where appropriate, communicate openly about how your organisation addresses racial equity or supports affected communities</p>
Religion or belief	<p>1. Communications may inadvertently reinforce harmful stereotypes about certain religious groups or fail to challenge misconceptions</p> <p>2. Not accommodating religious observances or failing to acknowledge holidays and practices can alienate religious groups</p> <p>3. Using language, imagery, or symbols that are culturally or religiously inappropriate or offensive</p>	<p>1. Avoid assuming a particular religious belief or practice. Instead, use inclusive terms like 'people of all faiths'</p> <p>2. Include a calendar of religious festivals within the plan</p> <p>3. Ensure your messaging is free from clichés or harmful assumptions about any religion. Include positive and accurate portrayals of diverse religious communities</p>
Sex	<p>1. Many communications still assume a binary sex framework (male/female), which excludes intersex individuals and those with atypical chromosomal variations</p>	<p>1. Use inclusive language like 'people of all sexes'</p>
Sexual Orientation	<p>1. Communications may inadvertently exclude or overlook individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, or other sexual orientation</p> <p>2. Imagery, language, or examples may omit LGBTQ+ individuals, creating a lack of visibility or reinforcement of heteronormative standards.</p> <p>3. Not recognising the full spectrum of sexual orientations, such as bisexual,</p>	<p>1. Use inclusive language that recognises all sexual orientations.</p> <p>2. Ensure that LGBTQ+ individuals are represented in imagery, stories, and examples in a respectful way</p> <p>3. Provide training for staff and team members on LGBTQ+</p>

	pansexual, asexual, or other orientations beyond lesbian and gay	terminology, respectful behaviour, and how to support an inclusive environment.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	n/a	n/a
The council recognises other communities may be vulnerable to disadvantage, this includes carers, people experiencing domestic abuse, substance misusers, homeless people, looked after children and care leavers, (ex) armed forces personnel.		Communication should be inclusive, respectful and clear in its language.

Actions Planned	
<p><i>In this section you can add information on additional or proactive steps you are taking that enhance equity, engagement or equality of access to services, as well as those mitigating actions identified in the section above that will be undertaken.</i></p> <p><i>The Equality Duty is an ongoing duty: policies must be kept under review, continuing to give 'due regard' to the duty. If an assessment of a broad proposal leads to more specific proposals, then further equality assessment and consultation are needed.</i></p> <p>This plan will ensure that the communication strategy will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be inclusive and respectful to all customers and stakeholders we serve, including residents, members, employees, businesses, community partners and visitors to the district • Tailoring language, tone, and content to resonate with diverse groups ensures everyone understands key information • Avoids jargon and uses plain English, or translates content where needed • Have accessible format options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing information in multiple formats as appropriate - Use screen reader technology online with accessible design documents • Make use of multiple channels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offer offline options (e.g. printed materials, phone lines, face-to-face briefings where appropriate in order to help reach older people, digitally excluded communities or those with limited access to technology) • Allow opportunities for all services to ask questions, provide feedback, or raise concerns in order to identify if a particular group is disproportionately affected or confused by the messaging 	

Additional Information
<i>Space to provide any additional information in relation to protected characteristics or equity, diversity, equality and inclusion.</i>

Sign off:

Equalities Lead Officer	Date
Shivani Davé	20/05/2025

