EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

23/11/2026

THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

PART I

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY (ADCCC)

1 Summary

1.1 The current Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Equality Objectives in place until end of 2026.

1.2 On 26 January 2026, Policy and Resources Committee reviewed and agreed to a public consultation on the new draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Objectives included within it.

1.3 A public consultation was held on the *Have your say* platform from 2 March to 5 May 2026.

1.4 This report presents a summary of the feedback received and changes made the policy and objectives resulting from the feedback, and the final draft policy for agreement.

2 Recommendation

2.1 That:

Committee agree the final Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Objectives and recommend to Council for adoption.

Report prepared by: Shivani Davé, Partnerships and Inclusion Manager

3 Details

3.1 Community engagement undertaken between August and September 2025 informed the development of the proposed objectives by identifying key issues affecting people with protected characteristics, supported by a review of progress and achievements against the 2022-26 objectives.

3.2 Following the decision for public consultation at P&R Committee on 26 January 2026, the public consultation was promoted through a range of resident, partnership networks. This included the Connecting Three Rivers Board, social media and internal communications, to encourage awareness and participation.

3.3 The draft Policy and Objectives were presented to the Equalities Forum. Forum attendee's were encouraged to contribute to and to share the consultation with their community members / service users.

3.4 The consultation was also promoted to council staff through the council's Inclusion and Wellbeing Working Group.

3.5 Summary of feedback received from the consultation is summarised below.

3.5.1 75 people visited the page on “Have Your Say” with 51 people responded to the consultation. A report from “Have Your Say” of the responses is included in Appendix 1.

3.5.2 27.5% felt there were issues relating to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) within Three Rivers, with 51% stating there were not. Feedback raised issues relating to discrimination within our communities experienced by people from diverse ethnic backgrounds and LGBTQ+ communities, opportunities for communities to integrate and the impact of school catchment areas and opportunities for people with disabilities.

3.5.3 72.5% of respondents felt the objectives addressed the main issues relating to EDI.

3.5.4 Feedback highlighted opportunities for the wording of some objectives to be made clearer. Other comments related to work to tackle hate crime – this has been shared with the council’s Community Safety Team.

3.5.5 66.7% thought the policy was clear on why those objectives were chosen and did not think they needed to change. Feedback from those who did not feel it was clear primarily focussed on what success will look like and clearer language.

3.5.6 90.2% felt the policy was easy to follow.

3.5.7 58.8% of respondents felt no additional information was required. Of the 19.6% who felt information was missing, feedback included the inclusion of hate crime, definitions of anti-semitism and islamophobia and anti-gypsyism, promotion of anti-discrimination, resources to deliver action plans and co-production with communities on council services.

3.6 From feedback received through the consultation, complaints and compliments received by the council and reviewing best practice with neighbouring councils the following changes made to the policy (attached, Appendix II):

Section 2

3.6.1 Inclusion of care leavers

3.6.2 Amended legislative change regarding Employment Rights Act.

3.6.3 Amended to reflect what is included within the Equality Act 2010.

Section 4

3.6.4 Changed objective from “To deliver and fund services that are grounded in fair conduct and practice” to “to fund and deliver services that promote fairness and accessibility”

3.6.5 Changed objective from “to make council services fair and reachable for everyone, encourage and support partner organisations to do the same” to “to make council services accessible for everyone, encourage and support partner organisations to do the same”

3.6.6 Changed objective from “to promote a diverse workforce and inclusive culture” to “to promote a diverse workforce and inclusive organisational culture”

3.6.7 Additional information on how the council’s EDI action plan fits in with the objectives

3.6.8 Additional information on how we will do this, and how we will measure success against each objective.

Section 6

3.6.9 New section on Reasonable Adjustments included. This was not raised in the consultation but clarity on process has been identified as a need within council policies to support a consistent approach for staff and residents.

3.6.10 An additional guidance document for staff on Reasonable Adjustments will be developed separately to this policy.

Section 7

3.6.11 Inclusion of Senior Leadership Team to roles and responsibilities

3.6.12 Section 8

3.6.13 Deletion of information on "our communities" within the policy due to the census data being gathered in 2020. However information will be available on the council's webpage that hosts this policy. Our research for this policy is also supported by the Herts Insight information depositary.

3.6.14 Section 8 now contains document information to improve version control.

4 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

4.1 The recommended changes listed above are in response to resident and corporate feedback and will enhance the policy by:

4.1.1 Changing the language used to improve accessibility of the document

4.1.2 Making the link to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan clearer

4.1.3 Developing a section on Reasonable Adjustments to improve clarity for staff and customers.

5 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

5.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets within the Service Plan for the Strategy and Partnerships Team

5.2 The recommendations in this report relate to the achievement of the following performance indicators.

5.3 The purpose of this proposed policy is to meet the statutory requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Financial, Environmental, Community Safety, Public Health, Communications & Website, Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

General implications to all service areas relating to meeting requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty. Improved clarity for all service areas in relation to Reasonable Adjustments for customers.

6 Legal Implications

6.1 Under the Public Sector Equality Duty the council is required to publish Equality Objectives at least every four years. The last objectives were agreed in 2022.

7 Equal Opportunities Implications

7.1 Impact Assessment

Impact Assessment demonstrated this policy will positively impact residents and staff with protected characteristics – and other characteristics not listed within the Equality Act 2010.

What actions were identified to address any detrimental impact or unmet need?

8 Staffing Implications

8.1 Impact on staffing in the development of the annual action plan and monitoring of action plan delivery.

8.2 Impact on staff to coordinate and deliver Inclusion and Wellbeing Working Group, as well as resource from all service areas to attend it.

9 Communications and Website Implications

9.1 Promotion of awareness days and initiatives, publication of the objectives and annual report.

10 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

10.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at http://www.threerivers.gov.uk. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

10.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Strategy and Partnerships service plan. Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this plan.

Nature of Risk	**Consequence**	**Suggested Control Measures**	**Response** *(tolerate, treat terminate, transfer)*	**Risk Rating** *(combination of likelihood and impact)*
Not meeting the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The PSED requires councils to publish Equality Objectives, publish annual compliance information and have due regard to the	If the policy is not adopted, the following consequences will need to be considered: Inability to demonstrate compliance with our legal duty under the	Council agreement of Policy and Objectives to ensure we comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty. Development	Treat Adopting this policy would mitigate the risk rating	8

Equality Act 2010 in decision making. The policy provides the framework for residents, councillors and council officers to meet the PSED.	Equality Act 2010. Additional resident complaints Legal fees resulting from legal challenges Reputational risk Enforcement action	and quarterly monitoring of Action Plan. E-learning for councillors and staff Champions within each service area Guidance relating to reasonable adjustments		

10.3 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

Likelihood				
Very Likely	**Low** 4	**High** 8	**Very High** 12	**Very High** 16
	Low 3	**Medium** 6	**High** 9	**Very High** 12
	Low 2	**Low** 4	**Medium** 6	**High** 8
Remote	**Low** 1	**Low** 2	**Low** 3	**Low** 4
	Impact			
	Low ----------▶			Unacceptable

Impact Score	Likelihood Score
4 (Catastrophic)	4 (Very Likely (≥80%))
3 (Critical)	3 (Likely (21-79%))
2 (Significant)	2 (Unlikely (6-20%))
1 (Marginal)	1 (Remote (≤5%))

10.4 In the officers' opinion none of the new risks above, were they to come about, would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Strategic Plan and are therefore operational risks. The effectiveness of the management of operational risks is reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

Data Quality

Data sources:

Equality Act 2010

Consultation results

Data checked by:

Rebecca Young

Data rating:

1	**Poor**	
2	**Sufficient**	
3	**High**	**x**

Background Papers

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

Appendix I – Have Your Say Report
Appendix II – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2026-2030

THREE RIVERS
DISTRICT COUNCIL