

## Report for Resolution

**Report to** Cabinet  
14 March 2012  
**Report of** Head of Strategy and Programme Management  
**Subject** Equality Objectives 2012-2016

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Item

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### Purpose

To approve the council's statutory equality objectives for 2012-2016

### Recommendations

To approve the draft equality objectives at Appendix A.

### Financial Consequences

The financial consequences of this report are none

### Risk Assessment

Not publishing the required objectives will be in breach of legal obligations

### Strategic Priority and Outcome/Service Priorities

The report helps to meet the strategic priority "Opportunities for all – communities to be able to access the wide range of services in the city provided by the Council" and the service plan priority OFA5 Reaching the Achieving Level of the Equality Framework for Local Government

**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Brociek-Coulton - Residents and Customer Care

**Ward:** All

### Contact Officers

Russell O'Keefe, Head of Strategy and Programme Management	01603 212908
Nadia Jones – Policy Officer	01603 212368
Phil Shreeve – Policy and Performance Manager	01603 212356

### Background Documents

Please see Appendix A

## **Report**

### **Norwich City Council Equality Objectives 2012-2016**

1. The Equality Act 2010 requires that relevant authorities responsible for achieving the aims of the general equalities duties undertake specific duties:
  - to publish an equality report by 31 January 2012 which we have done.
  - to publish equality objectives by 6 April 2012, which is appendix A.
2. The equality objectives have been developed from a range of research, consultations and focus groups in and around Norwich over recent years.
3. The proposed equality objectives are aligned with the corporate priorities in the new corporate plan for 2012-15.
4. The equality objectives will be accompanied by an action plan, developed from the equality actions within service plans.
5. It is the intention to discuss with the Equalities Forum how we gain momentum on the objectives and actions to ensure we are responding to our general equality duties and use this to further inform our action plan.
6. Once all of these tasks are complete, all the work undertaken will be drawn together to create the Corporate Equality Strategy 2012-2015, with annual updates of the equality information and action plan.

# Equality objectives

## 1. Introduction

The equality objectives for Norwich City Council are a rationalisation of information gathered from a range of sources including consultations, literature reviews, joint working with partners, and national and regional data where appropriate. The objectives listed below have been identified as they have reoccurred several times and apply to more than one protected characteristic. We recognise that concerns regarding areas such as health and social care are significant for many of the protected characteristic groups; however this rationalisation acknowledges a need to target our resources where we have a responsibility to deliver services, and can therefore have the greatest impact. These objectives are for the following protected characteristics:

- age
- gender
- disability
- race
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity.

## 2. Recommended objectives

### Tackling hate incidents and crimes

We have an anti-social behaviour team which leads on dealing with hate incidents and crimes. We have visible procedures in place for all employees on how to report issues. We are planning to roll out mandatory e-learning for all, and in partnership with members of the multi-agency protocol led by Norfolk Constabulary, we hope to have targeted training delivered in-house by the end of 2012. We recognise there is a great deal of under-reporting from all groups, and seek to encourage reporting through raising awareness with our partners in the hate crime sub-group for the multi-agency protocol.

This objective links with the corporate plan priority SAFE AND CLEAN CITY.

## Access to quality information, advice and advocacy - including financial capability

Welfare benefits and legal aid legislation may have an impact on access to justice for vulnerable groups. We held a welfare rights seminar in autumn 2011 focussing on fact finding regarding financial inclusion of vulnerable groups. A new commissioning framework is in place, which will allow us to undertake strategic needs assessments on reducing inequalities, as well as maintaining the resilience of voluntary sector organisations in the current economic climate.

This objective links with the corporate plan priority PROSPEROUS CITY

## Treating people with dignity and respect

This objective was particularly emphasised as being about challenging stereotypes and negative attitudes of all public sector organisations. Norwich City Council has robust procedures in place regarding discrimination and harassment; however this objective seeks to go further than this. Customer service standards should be underpinned by human rights considerations. And we will ensure that we continue to closely monitor complaints or issues across departments within the organisation.

This objective links with the CORE VALUES in the corporate plan.

## Accessible and safe housing

This priority is one which we have a direct responsibility for, and therefore within appropriate service areas we will develop equality objectives and actions where we have identified specific issues or needs.

This objective links with the corporate priority DECENT HOUSING FOR ALL.