

Thanet District Council (TDC) Equality Impact Assessment

Step one: test for relevance

1 Person responsible for this assessment

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Service area:	Strategy and Transformation	Date of assessment:	05.02.24

2 Others involved in carrying out the analysis

Name:	Ingrid Brown - Head of Legal and Democracy and Monitoring Officer
Name:	Callum Parsons - Information Governance and Equalities Officer
Name:	Richard Knight - Policy Manager

3. Description of strategy, policy, service, project, activity or decision

Title:	Proposed new Corporate Plan and new priorities for the four year period 2024 to 2028
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Is it new?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
A review of existing?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.1 Aims and objectives

Consider: **what** you are doing? **why** you are doing it? **who** will benefit?

The council is creating a new Corporate Plan for the period 2024 to 2028. This plan intends to set out the direction of travel for the council over the next four years by identifying the overarching priorities for the future of Thanet. The plan is essential to help the council work towards achieving its longer-term vision for the district, ensuring resources across the council are focused on what matters most to local people. It will therefore be aligned with the budget setting process and timetable.

3.2 What outcomes are expected? Who is expected to benefit?

Having a clearly defined Corporate Plan provides a focus for the council to plan its work. As well as setting out higher level aspirations for the district it also outlines specific activity and projects that the council aims to achieve over the next four years.

The draft Corporate Plan sets out five new core priorities for the council to focus on over the next four years:

Priority one: To keep our district safe and clean

Priority two: To deliver the housing we need

Priority three: To protect our environment

Priority four: To create a thriving place

Priority five: To work efficiently for you

Under each of the five priority headings within the Corporate Plan, a short summary statement is given to explain what the priority is. There are bullet points which provide a brief overview of how we intend to do this and there are also some examples given of the projects which will be delivered to achieve this.

Progress against these areas will be carried out as part of regular corporate performance monitoring.

New Service Plans will also be created to support delivery of the Corporate plan. These are the operational plans which set out how the four year plan will be delivered.

Annual staff appraisals will then be set based on the Service Plans and wider Corporate Plan to ensure that all members of staff are clear of the important role they provide in helping the council to achieve its aims.

The Corporate Plan is a district wide document and intends to ensure that the council works to support all residents and communities.

By working to a Corporate Plan, council resources will be focused on what matters the most, service delivery will be strengthened with the council and its partners working towards a common vision.

4 Who is affected?

- 4.1 Which groups or individuals does the strategy, policy, service, project, activity or decision affect? For example, the Council, employees (including temporary workers), other public authorities, contractors, partner organisations, wider community, others.

The Corporate Plan is all encompassing and affects both internal and external groups.

Internally it sets the direction for the organisation so that officers and Councillors are clear about the council's priorities and are working towards achieving a common vision for Thanet and its communities. The decisions taken and work delivered should all ultimately support the priorities and ten year vision - set out below.

Externally the Corporate Plan aims to focus the council on the areas that residents consistently tell us that matter most to them (clean streets, feeling safe, thriving towns) with the overarching aim to create

a vibrant coastal resort where communities, businesses and residents thrive, as set out in the ten year vision statement.

The Corporate Plan is also important in outlining the areas we will focus on to our partners and wider stakeholders with the aim to work collaboratively with them to achieve this.

Our ten year vision statement

Thanet: A vibrant coastal resort where communities, businesses and residents thrive, supported by a listening and efficient council. Prosperity is increasing for all, protecting the environment is a common goal and there is pride in our beautiful place.

4.2 Does the strategy, policy, service, project, activity or decision relate to a service area with known inequalities? (Give a brief description).

The proposed new Corporate Plan and supporting priorities provide the overarching strategic direction for the delivery of services within the district. Although the plan does not state how services themselves should be specifically delivered or developed, it has been created in the context of understanding that Thanet is a socio-economically deprived area (as set out in the section titled 'Where we are today: key demographics'). As outlined, Thanet is the 34th most deprived district nationally out of 317 districts, according to the English Indices of Deprivation 2019. The Corporate Plan, and indeed all of our proposed workstreams, are at the core intended to mitigate this socio-economic variation as far as possible and have been created in the context of considering other inequalities in the area. Policies, strategies and detailed business planning documents will translate the proposed new priorities into actions and where relevant these will be assessed against the Equalities Act 2010 and the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

5 Equality Act 2010

How does the strategy, policy, service, project, activity or decision actively meet the public sector equality duties to:

Eliminate unlawful discrimination (including harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct)

The Corporate Plan in its widest sense is intended to be all encompassing and ensure the council is working for all communities within the district.

The Corporate Plan will be underpinned by detailed Service Plans which will set out how each council service area will support delivery of the new proposed priorities.

A detailed review of all council policies will also take place, a piece of work which has already started. The policies will be re-aligned to sit within the new priority areas proposed by the Corporate Plan. This will include a detailed refresh of the council's Equality Policy, procedures and practices which will be rolled out across the council. This will specifically ensure that the council is working as a whole to eliminate unlawful discrimination and ensure that groups with protected characteristics are considered when decisions are made or projects are delivered which support the delivery of the Corporate Plan. This will include ensuring that robust equality considerations are included within all committee reports and that individual EIAs are undertaken to support service changes, ensuring that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against. Individual service area policies will also be updated and refreshed to ensure they appropriately reflect the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

planning.

Advance equality of opportunity (between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it)

The Corporate Plan is working towards a ten year vision which wants communities and residents to thrive and to increase prosperity for all, thereby minimising disadvantage to all the protected characteristic groups.

Foster good relations (between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it). Could it have an adverse impact on relations between different diverse groups?

Again this is something which is inherent across the whole Corporate Plan, however priorities four and five are the areas with outcomes which will be most closely aligned to fostering good relations between different diverse groups. This is due to the opportunities they offer around community engagement and the chance therefore for those who share a protected characteristic and those who don't to work together jointly. For example, within priority four to create a thriving place, this will be achieved through delivery of the council's externally funded regeneration schemes which have been introduced to support the levelling up of the district, ensuring opportunities are provided to communities in more deprived neighbourhoods. The delivery of these regeneration programmes are underpinned throughout by community engagement so that the individual projects are shaped by those who live in, work in and visit the wards concerned. Within priority five, to work more efficiently for you, there will also be a focus on ensuring that more opportunities are provided for residents to help shape the way we work, which again will be supported by increasing the engagement the council delivers. The commitment given 'to continue to transform and improve the way we deliver services online' will particularly need to focus on ensuring that those with protected characteristics are not digitally excluded and that activity aligns with the Government best practice in relation to supporting Digital Inclusion.

6 Priority

The following questions will help you to identify whether this 'service' is a high priority. Please answer all questions with particular reference to the protected characteristics; race, gender, gender reassignment, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, marriage and civil marriage/partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

Please provide a comment for each answer, providing evidence for your answer, regardless whether you have answered yes or no.

Questions	Yes	No
1. Are there any particular groups who may have trouble accessing the 'service'?		x
<p>Comments: The proposed new Corporate Plan provides the overarching strategic direction for the delivery of services within the District, they do not themselves state how services should be delivered or developed. Policies, strategies and detailed business planning documents will translate the proposed plan into actions and where relevant these will be assessed against the Equalities Act 2010 and the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.</p>		
2. Does your information suggest that some groups of people are less satisfied than others with this 'service'?		x
<p>Comments: Currently there is no evidence to determine whether particular groups are less satisfied than others as this is a proposed new plan. As part of the future monitoring of progress against the Corporate Plan however feedback can be sought from residents and communities which could also capture demographic information to measure satisfaction of people from different groups.</p>		
3. Will this service have a significant impact on any of our residents?		x
<p>Comments: The proposed new Corporate Plan provides the overarching strategic direction for the delivery of services within the District, they do not themselves state how services should be delivered or developed. Policies, strategies and detailed business planning documents will translate the proposed new Core Business Objectives into actions and where relevant these will be assessed against the Equalities Act 2010 and the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.</p> <p>There is no reason to state at this time that the content of the proposed new Corporate Plan will negatively impact any groups with protected characteristics. The ten year vision aims to increase prosperity for all and help residents and communities thrive.</p>		
4. Do you have any evidence that discrimination, harassment and/or victimisation could occur as part of this service?		x
<p>Comments: There is no reason that the proposed new Corporate Plan will negatively impact any groups with protected characteristics. Any subsequent reports that flow from the Corporate Plan will continue to be assessed to ensure that discrimination, harassment and/or victimisation do not occur or are prevented and tackled.</p>		
5. Do you think the service will hinder communication and negatively impact relations between the organisation and its employees, residents, contractors or anyone else?		x
<p>Comments:</p>		

<p>There is no reason to state at this time that the content of the proposed new Corporate Plan will negatively impact any groups with protected characteristics. Policies, strategies and detailed business planning documents will translate the proposed new Core Business Objectives into actions and where relevant these will be assessed against the Equalities Act 2010 and the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.</p> <p>The council will carry out communications activity to promote/engage local people in the rollout of the new Corporate Plan. Placing more emphasis on proactive communication and engagement with the community to ensure this positively impacts relations between the council and the wider communities and stakeholders.</p> <p>Within a number of the new Corporate Priorities proposed, the council specifically references continuing to work with key partners and stakeholders to help achieve our aspirations for Thanet. Through effective partnership working the council will provide leadership and direction across the district to help improve outcomes for our residents by working towards a common vision and goals.</p> <p>Training and communication – an online e-learning training programme is offered to all staff; this addresses both the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the council’s own commitment to equalities and diversity.</p> <p>Committee reports – the guidance to members ensures Councillors are fully informed of equalities implications of any decisions they are required to make.</p>		
<p>6. Does this service need to improve the way in which it is communicated to people who have literacy, numeracy or any other access needs?</p>		x
<p>Comments:</p> <p>Although there is no reason to believe that the proposed Corporate Plan will negatively impact those with protected characteristics, the council should ensure that once approved, that the Corporate Plan is as clear and simple for people to understand and foster accessibility by meeting the The Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018. Wherever possible the council should be communicating in clear and easy to understand language, avoiding jargon and using images and infographics where possible for ease of understanding. Council communication is now tested against the Hemingway app (other similar tools are available) to ensure that information published meets the Gov.UK best practice guidance for writing content which is usually recommended for a maximum reading age of nine years old.</p>		
<p>7. Does consultation need to be carried out?</p>	x	
<p>Comments:</p> <p>The Draft Corporate Plan has been through a robust public consultation process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A seven week consultation was held, which was open from Tuesday 14 November 2023 until Tuesday 2 January 2024. • This consultation exercise linked directly with the annual residents’ survey which included questions about residents’ priorities and satisfaction with key 		

<p>council services. It also included questions on the proposed budget for 2024-25.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An invitation to participate in the survey was sent to 6,000 randomly selected residents for feedback. 259 people responded. • A wider opportunity for comment was also available via an online survey on our engagement platform: Your Voice Thanet. 299 people responded. • There was an opportunity for residents to request a hard copy of the survey if they preferred. A total of four hard copy surveys were submitted. • A link to the draft Corporate Plan was shared with key stakeholders, inviting them to comment on the proposed plan and community groups were also encouraged to support the promotion of the survey to people within their networks. • A staff survey was conducted during this consultation period which included some questions on the Corporate Plan proposals. 	
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In order to assess the priority of your **'service'** please complete the table below by adding up how many questions you answered yes to and following the appropriate action.

Priority	Number of questions answered 'yes'	Rating	Action
High	3 or more		Continue to section 2
Medium	1 to 2		Please provide evidence to any questions you answered 'yes' to in section 1. Test for relevance complete (sometimes a full assessment may be required).
Low	0		Test for relevance complete.

If, following the completion of the test for relevance, a full assessment is not required, go straight to the declaration. If a full assessment is required, go to Step two: full equality impact assessment.

Step two: full equality impact assessment

1 Could the strategy, policy, service, project, activity or decision have a **negative, positive or neutral** effect on groups or individuals?

Consider:

What you are doing?

Why you are doing it?

How you are doing it?

Who can access the service easily and who may not be able to access the service and **why**?

The full analysis explores ways to reduce or eliminate barriers and/or negative impacts.

Protected characteristics	N e g a t i v e	P o s i t i v e	N e u t r a l	<p align="center">Evidence/Reasoning</p> <p align="center">(Consider any barriers which will have negative impact and/or good practices giving positive impact)</p>
<p>Age</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The way younger and older people access services may be different • Use of technology • Child care/care of other dependant • Timings/flexibility, such as work patterns • Transport arrangements • Venue location 			x	<p>Recommendations:</p> <p>It is not considered that the Corporate Plan will have a significant impact based on age. The council does now have a Youth Council who will be included in the roll out of the new Corporate Plan.</p>
<p>Disability (Includes: physical, learning, sensory (deaf/blind), mental health)</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication methods • Accessibility – venue, location, transport • Range of support needed to participate • Hearing Loops/Interpreters • Disability awareness training for employees 			x	<p>Recommendations:</p> <p>It is not considered that the Corporate Plan will have a significant impact based on disability. The final version of the Corporate Plan needs to be written in plain and clear language using government best practice to ensure it meets accessibility needs when it is published on the website.</p>
<p>Race (Includes; gypsy, travelling, refugee and migrant communities)</p> <p>Consider:</p>			x	<p>Recommendations:</p> <p>It is not considered that the Corporate Plan will have a significant impact based on race.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The size of the BME communities that your service/project affects. • Language(s) spoken/understood. • Culture, such as hygiene, clothing, physical activities, mixed gender activities. • What access support can you offer? 			
<p>Religion, faith or belief</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The diversity within the communities that your service/project affect • Prayer times, meal times, food (some religions do not eat meat), cultural habit or belief, religious holidays such as Ramadan • Awareness training for employees 		x	<p>Recommendations:</p> <p>It is not considered that the Corporate Plan will have a significant impact based on religion, faith or belief.</p>
<p>Pregnancy and maternity</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible hours of the service/project • Is there access to private area for breastfeeding mothers? 		x	<p>Recommendations:</p> <p>It is not considered that the Corporate Plan will have a significant impact based on pregnancy and maternity.</p>
<p>Gender</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact on men and women • Child care/care of other dependant • Mixed/single gender groups/activities • Timing of services/projects 		x	<p>Recommendations:</p> <p>It is not considered that the Corporate Plan will have a significant impact based on gender.</p>
<p>Sexual orientation (Includes: lesbian, gay, bisexual)</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGB people should feel safe to disclose their sexual orientation without fear of prejudice • Make it clear you recognised civil 		x	<p>Recommendations:</p> <p>It is not considered that the Corporate Plan will have a significant impact based on sexual orientation.</p>

marriage and partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness training for employees 				
Transgender Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trans people should be able to disclose their gender identity without fear of prejudice Making it clear you have a Trans policy and process Awareness training for employees 			x	Recommendations: It is not considered that the Corporate Plan will have a significant impact based on gender reassignment.
Marriage and civil marriage/partnership Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All couples or partners, regardless of gender, should be able to access services 			x	Recommendations: It is not considered that the Corporate Plan will have a significant impact based on marriage/civil partnership.

Outsourced services	
If your policy/process is partly or wholly provided by external organisations/agencies (such as Civica or Capita), please list any arrangements you plan to ensure that they promote equality and diversity. Include this in your improvement plan	Not applicable
Relations between different equality groups	
Does your assessment show that a strategy, policy or process may amount to potential adverse impact between different equality groups? If yes please explain how the improvement plan is going to tackle this issue	No
Consultation responses	
Summary of replies from individuals and stakeholders consulted including any previous complaints on equality and diversity issues about the strategy, policy or process	There were 259 responses to the targeted, Annual Residents' Survey. Within the survey, respondents were asked about the proposed Corporate Plan. They were asked in general, to what extent they either agreed or disagreed with the proposed ten year vision statement for Thanet, and then with each of the five proposed corporate priorities.

67.5% stated in general, they either strongly agree or somewhat agree with the proposed **vision statement**. 13.5% stated they neither agree nor disagree and 18.9% stated they either strongly disagree or somewhat disagree.

81.1% stated in general, they either strongly agree or somewhat agree with **priority one: To keep our district safe and clean**. 8.9% stated they neither agree nor disagree and 10% stated they either strongly disagree or somewhat disagree.

64.5% stated in general, they either strongly agree or somewhat agree with **priority two: To deliver the housing we need**. 15.1% neither agree nor disagree and 20.5% stated they either strongly disagree or somewhat disagree.

70.7% stated in general, they either strongly agree or somewhat agree with **priority three: To protect our environment**. 11.6% neither agree nor disagree and 17.7% stated they either strongly disagree or somewhat disagree.

84.9% stated in general, they either strongly agree or somewhat agree with **priority four: To create a thriving place**. 7.3% neither agree nor disagree and 7.7% stated they either strongly disagree or somewhat disagree.

80.3% stated in general, they either strongly agree or somewhat agree with **priority five: To work efficiently for you**. 12.7% neither agree nor disagree and 7% stated they either strongly disagree or somewhat disagree.

In addition to the targeted survey, there were 299 responses to the

	<p>open, Your Voice Thanet survey. The trend of responses broadly echoed those of the targeted sample survey.</p> <p>60.9% agreed with the vision statement 80% agreed with priority one 67.2% agreed with priority two 69.6% agreed with priority three 80.6% agreed with priority four 80.2% agreed with priority five</p>
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Summary of recommendations		
Actions	By Who	By When

Declaration

I am satisfied that a Test for Relevance has been carried out on the matter named in this Analysis and conclude that a full Equality Impact Assessment **is not required**.

Yes No

If you do not think that a full Equality Impact Assessment is required – please give your reasons:

I confirm that a full Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.

Yes No

Signature of Head of Service:	Date:

Recommendations agreed:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Signed: (Director):	EIA date: