REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive

8th September 2026

Equality Strategy 2026-2028 (inc. Engagement Policy)

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Matthew Dormer (Leader)
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Assistant Director		Hannah Corredor
Report Author	Job Title: Performance & Improvement Manager Contact email: h.mole@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 881685	
Wards Affected		All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		N/A
Relevant Council Priority		High-Quality Services
Non-Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee RECOMMEND that: -

1) The Equality Strategy 2026 – 2028 (including the Engagement Policy) be approved.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Council previously operated under an Equality Strategy covering the period 2022-2026 and an Engagement Strategy from 2022 to 2025. These strategies have helped embed equality considerations across service delivery, decision-making, engagement and workforce practices. As those strategies have now reached the end of their intended timeframe, an updated Equality Strategy, which includes the Engagement Policy as an appendix, have been developed for 2026-2028.

2.2 Progress and achievements from the previous strategies will be reported through the Councils' annual reporting arrangements alongside future updates on delivery of the new strategy.

2.3 The Equality Strategy is supported by an Action Plan, which brings together activity taking place across Council services to deliver the authority's equality objectives. The Action Plan enables more consistent monitoring of progress under each objective and enables the Council to demonstrate to residents how equality considerations are being embedded within the authority's work.

2.4 The refreshed Engagement Policy is included as an appendix to the Equality Strategy, demonstrating how effective equality work depends on high-quality insight and an understanding of the needs and experiences

of different communities. It sets out how the Council will undertake inclusive and meaningful engagement so that the insight gathered from residents, community groups, partners, and staff can inform Equality Impact Assessments, service improvement activity and wider decision-making.

2.5 Housing Services has a dedicated Engagement Strategy for Redditch tenants which aligns with and complements the corporate approach, whilst also meeting the specific requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing

3. OPERATIONAL DETAIL

3.1 Both documents build on the Council's existing equality and engagement work and reflect learning from residents, community groups, partners, and staff over the four-year period of the last strategy. They provide an updated framework for ensuring equality, accessibility and community insight from approval until unitarisation in 2028.

3.2 The strategy sets out four equality objectives for 2026-2028:

- Continue to deliver fair and accessible services.
- Strengthen inclusive engagement and communication.
- Improve understanding of communities and support inclusion.
- Support an inclusive and representative workforce.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications. However, where future actions arising from the Equality Action Plan or engagement activity require additional resources, these will need to be considered through the relevant service planning, budget setting or decision-making process.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Equality Strategy supports the Council in meeting the authority's responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Duty requires local authorities to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups.

5.2 Approval of these documents will provide a clear framework for demonstrating that equality, accessibility and community engagement are embedded within policy development, service delivery and decision-making across the Council.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation

6.1 Both documents recognise the importance of maintaining a consistent approach to equality, accessibility and community engagement during the upcoming transition through Local Government Reorganisation into a North Worcestershire unitary council.

Relevant Council Priority

6.2 The Equality Strategy and Engagement Policy contribute to the delivery of high-quality services.

6.3 Together, they help ensure services are informed by the needs and experiences of residents, support continuous improvement and promote fair, effective, and inclusive service delivery across the Council.

Community Impact

6.4 The strategies will have a positive impact on local communities by helping the Council to better understand local needs, support inclusion and ensure that services and decisions are informed by the views and experiences of residents. This contributes to community well-being and cohesion across the Borough.

Climate Change Implications

6.5 There are no direct climate change implications arising from the approval of the Equality Strategy and Engagement Policy. The documents do not commit the Council to any specific projects, developments or operational activities that would directly affect greenhouse gas emissions, energy consumption or climate adaptation measures.

6.6 However, the principles set out within the Equality Strategy and Engagement Policy support inclusive decision-making and engagement, which can help ensure that the impacts of climate change and environmental changes on different communities are better understood. This is particularly relevant for groups who may be disproportionately affected by extreme weather, fuel poverty, poor housing conditions or other climate-related risks.

6.7 Future actions, policies or projects developed under the framework of these documents will continue to be considered on their individual merits and, where appropriate, will be subject to separate assessment of climate change implications.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.8 The subject matter of this report is directly concerned with equality, diversity and inclusion.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 Without an up-to-date Equality Strategy and Engagement Policy, there is a risk that the Council cannot clearly demonstrate how equality and engagement considerations are embedded. This could increase the risk of inconsistent practice across services and reduce assurance that the Council is meeting its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty.

7.2 The approved documents will help mitigate these risks by providing a clear and consistent framework for considering equality impacts, engaging with residents and communities and supporting informed decision-making. The Action Plan will also support the delivery and monitoring of identified priorities over the life of the Strategy.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix A - Equality Strategy 2026-2028
Appendix 1 - Engagement Policy 2026-2028

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	**Name and Job Title**	**Date**
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Matt Dormer (Leader)	July 2026
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Hannah Corredor	03/08/26
Financial Services	Paul Earley	04/08/26
Legal Services	Claire Felton	05/08/26
	Emily Payne	N/A

Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	Engagement & Equalities Advisor Helen Mole Business Improvement Manager	as authors
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Matt Eccles, Climate Change Manager .	04.08.26