AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title: Use of Councillor Suffixes

Name of Committee: Council

Date of Meeting: 13 March 2024

Report Director: Chief Officer – Legal and Governance

Portfolio: Finance, Performance, Legal and Governance

Ward Relevance: All

Prior Consultation: Equality and Diversity Steering Group

Contact Officer: Aftab Razzaq, Chief Officer – Legal and Governance Aftab.Razzaq@rugby.gov.uk

Public or Private: Public

Report Subject to Call-In: No

Report En-Bloc: No

Forward Plan: No

Corporate Priorities:

(C) Climate
(E) Economy
(HC) Health and Communities
(O) Organisation

This report relates to the following priority(ies):
☐ Rugby is an environmentally sustainable place, where we work together to reduce and mitigate the effects of climate change. (C)
☐ Rugby has a diverse and resilient economy that benefits and enables opportunities for all residents. (E)
☐ Residents live healthy, independent lives, with the most vulnerable protected. (HC)
☒ Rugby Borough Council is a responsible, effective and efficient organisation. (O)
Corporate Strategy 2021-2024
☐ This report does not specifically relate to any Council priorities but

Summary: This report relates to a motion considered by Council and delegated for consideration by the Equality and Diversity Steering Group.

Financial Implications: None arising directly from this report.

Risk Management/Health and Safety Implications: None arising directly from this report.

Environmental Implications:	None arising directly from this report.
Legal Implications:	None arising directly from this report.
Equality and Diversity:	The Council has considered its Equality and Diversity implications in accordance with the attached impact assessment at Appendix 2.
Options:	To approve or not approve.
Recommendation:	The removal of all suffixes in addressing all Councillors, unless requested by any individual Councillor, be approved.
Reasons for Recommendation:	To ensure that the Council is ensuring consistency across all Councillors and considering specific requests.

Council - 13 March 2024

Use of Councillor Suffixes

Public Report of the Chief Officer – Legal and Governance

Recommendation
The removal of all suffixes in addressing all Councillors, unless requested by any individual Councillor, be approved.

1. Executive Summary

The recommendation within this report has been proposed by the Council's Equality and Diversity Steering Group. This recommendation seeks to facilitate consistency in addressing all Councillors. It also proposes to allow any individual requests to ensure the Council is implementing the needs and requirements of all Councillors.

2. Background

2.1. During September Full Council the following motion was considered;

"This Council respects the equality and diversity of individuals, and this includes how female Councillors are addressed. By adding "Mrs" or "Ms" to the title of female Councillors, the Council is implicitly saying all Councillors are male unless otherwise designated. As gender and marital status have no relevance to undertaking the role of a Councillor, the suffix of Mrs or Ms must be removed from the Council naming convention for Councillors.
I would request that this matter is considered by the Equality and Diversity Steering Group."

2.2. This Motion was considered by Full Council and referred to the Equality and Diversity Steering Group. This in part considers the Council's duty under the Equality and Diversity Act and the use of inclusive language. The attached paper at Appendix 1 produced by the Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion provides some initial guidance in respect of the Council's obligations towards the use of 'Inclusive Language'. In addition, there is set out below the position of other local authorities on this matter;

Council	Agendas and Minutes	Website	Additional Comments	Procedure/ Protocol
Rugby Borough Council	Female Councillors – Councillor Title and Surname Male Councillors – Councillor Surname	Councillor First Name and Surname		No
Harborough District Council	Councillor Surname	Councillor First Name and Surname	Adhoc requests from councillors would be honoured. They have one Cllr Mrs Surname by personal request.	No
Warwick District Council	Councillor Surname			Not known
Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council	Councillor Initial and Surname	Councillor First Name and Surname		Not known
Coventry City Council	Councillor Initial and Surname	Councillor First Name and Surname	Adhoc requests are honoured.	Not known
West Northamptonshire Council	Councillor First Name and Surname	Councillor First Name and Surname		Not known
Warwickshire County Council	Councillor First Name and Surname	Councillor First Name and Surname		Not known

Note: Where two councillors have the same surname, generally their initial is also used. A councillor who is a Dr usually has this title included but there may be exceptions to this.

3. Conclusion

As set out above there is a clear basis for changing the Council's past practice in addressing Councillors. The proposed recommendation seeks to implement consistency alongside consideration of any specific requests by Councillors.

Name of Meeting: Council

Date of Meeting: 13 March 2024

Subject Matter: Use of Councillor Suffixes

Originating Department: Legal and Governance

DO ANY BACKGROUND PAPERS APPLY   ☐ **YES**   ☒ **NO**

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Doc No	Title of Document and Hyperlink

The background papers relating to reports on planning applications and which are open to public inspection under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972, consist of the planning applications, referred to in the reports, and all written responses to consultations made by the Local Planning Authority, in connection with those applications.

☐ Exempt information is contained in the following documents:

Doc No	Relevant Paragraph of Schedule 12A

Employer Guide to

Inclusive Language

Introduction

Organisations should use effective and inclusive language to create a welcoming and inclusive environment. If inclusive language is not used, the audience may interpret the messaging in a way that is not how it was intended. The purpose of this guide is to offer guidance on how you can embed inclusive language into your verbal or written communications.

Language relating to diversity is continuously evolving; it varies in different parts of the world. The language contained within this guide is not exhaustive or definitive and is designed for use within British society, therefore it may not apply to overseas territories. However, the main principles of the guide should be applicable in most instances.

This guide offers examples of certain terms that are unacceptable under any circumstances. They serve to identify types of derogatory language that might come up in informal conversation (what some people might refer to as a joke or a form of banter) but should still never be tolerated. These examples of unacceptable terms have purely been provided to help inform decision making and shape policies around inclusive language.

Every organisation is different, and this guide does not provide definitive solutions for every situation. It also does not offer legal guidance; you should seek authoritative advice when introducing new policies or changing old ones. Instead, it shares suggestions that could help you decide what suits your organisation best.

What is inclusive language?

Inclusive language reflects social and cultural diversity in a positive manner. To communicate using inclusive language means avoiding words or terms that discriminate, exclude, or undermine individuals or groups of people.

References to people's personal attributes, such as their race, gender, marital status, or religion, must be appropriate, relevant to the context, and used consistently. For example, referring to a female parent colleague as a single mother is not necessarily essential information in the context of a work-related conversation—nor is it a term that is typically communicated about a male parent colleague in the same way or with the same frequency. Terms like this can be undermining and may relay negative feelings, stereotypes, and behaviours.

Many everyday terms and expressions can create and reinforce bias whether they are used consciously or unconsciously. This can create a work environment that can be humiliating, offensive, and alienating. As the primary form of communication, language plays a powerful role both in contributing to—and eliminating—discrimination.

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Language can also create and reinforce negative stereotypes about groups of people by either exaggerating or isolating features. Language that is exclusive can inhibit or prevent your communications from effectively reaching the widest possible audience.

The impact of inclusive language in the workplace

There are some general principles associated with inclusive communication in the workplace that should help to keep you from simply relying on language that may change over time. These include:

- Taking an individualised approach. Everyone is different and should not be defined by one aspect of who they are.
- Only mentioning sensitive personal characteristics when relevant.
- Being guided by the terms people use to describe themselves. When appropriate, ask.
- Respecting privacy. Let others share personal information about themselves only where they feel comfortable doing so; don't probe.
- Avoiding irrelevant references to a characteristic.
- Avoiding stereotyping by making positive or negative generalisations about groups of people.
- If you are listing personal characteristics, put them in alphabetical order to show they all have equal value.
- If you are asking people about their personal characteristics using multiple choice options, include the option of "prefer not to say" and, where possible, allow people to self-describe.
- If you make a mistake in the language you use, apologise, correct it, learn from it, and move on.

For customer, employee, or stakeholder communications, the form of address must be correct. Many of the titles traditionally used in the UK indicate gender and sometimes relationship status. Therefore, it is good practice to include a gender-neutral option such as Mx.

Mx entered the Oxford English Dictionary in 2015, Mx (pronounced Mix or Mux) is a gender-neutral form of address that is now commonly accepted by government departments, councils, and many businesses including Royal Mail.

It is considered best practice to offer a choice of options for individuals to choose from in alphabetical order. These include:
- Dame
- Dr
- Imam
- Lady

- Lord
- Master
- Miss
- Mr
- Mrs
- Ms
- Mx
- Prof
- Rabbi
- Rev
- Sir

Inclusive language and the Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced in England, Scotland, and Wales to simplify equality law in Great Britain. The Act protects people in employment (as well as users of services) in Great Britain based on one or more of the nine protected characteristics defined as:

1. Age
2. Sex (While the Equality Act 2010 uses the term sex rather than gender when specifically referring to the protected characteristic, you may wish to make additional considerations when using this term for certain purposes, including data collection.)
3. Race (While the Equality Act 2010 uses the term race rather than ethnicity when specifically referring to the protected characteristic, you may wish to make additional considerations when using this term for certain purposes, including data collection.)
4. Disability
5. Religion or belief
6. Sexual orientation
7. Gender reassignment
8. Marriage or civil partnerships
9. Pregnancy and maternity

As part of your organisation's approach to the characteristics protected under the Equality Act, there are certain practices you may wish to consider in terms of communications. In general, there are certain principles to consider:

- Don't mention protected characteristics or use related descriptions unless necessary to the context.
- When it is appropriate, protected characteristics should only be used as an adjective rather than a noun, and you should take a person-centred approach. Do not define someone by their protected characteristic.
- Only use factually correct statements or descriptions that are not linked to stereotypes associated with protected characteristics.

- Be guided by the terms people use to describe themselves and don't make assumptions based on protected characteristics.

Inclusive language about age

Language should be welcoming and sensitive to people of all ages. You should avoid using terminology that assumes that people of certain age groups or generations are the same or have similar skills, abilities, ambitions, and views.

Reference to differences among different age groups should only be used as relative terms with a clear and specific context, for example when analysing data. They should never be used to make generalisations about a group of people. Avoid these other generalisations as well:

- Older people are not all grumpy, boring, or bad with technology.
- Women around the age of 50 are not all menopausal (and being menopausal is not a bad thing).
- Young people are not all lazy, arrogant, or naive.

In recruitment, don't use language to suggest the age of the job holder, for example, "you will join a young and energetic team", or "the job holder should have 15 years of experience". Think carefully before asking questions at interview that could be linked to age. Stick to competencies instead. For example, rather than asking, "how would you feel about managing an older team?" say "what skills do you have that will help you effectively manage a team?"

Say:
- "An older person", "an older adult", or "older people" instead of "the old" or "the elderly".
- "Younger person", "younger people ", "young adults", or specify the age of the people you are referring to instead of "the young" or "kids" (unless you are talking about people under the age of 18).
- "Generation Z" or "younger generations" instead of "the woke generation".

It is never acceptable to say:
- Geriatric or senile, as this suggests a link between older age and incompetence or inability.
- Mature adult to describe an older person, as it suggests younger people are not mature.
- Snowflakes to describe younger generations, as it suggests weakness.

Inclusive language about sex, gender, and gender identity

While the terms sex and gender are often used interchangeably, they are two different concepts as explained in Office for National Statistics, What is the difference between sex and gender? In summary:

Sex refers to the biological aspects of an individual as determined by anatomy and produced by chromosomes, hormones, and their interactions; sex is generally male or female or sometimes inter-sex and is something that is reported or assumed at birth. Note that the Equality Act 2010 uses the term sex (not gender) when referring to the protected characteristic.

Gender is a social construction relating to behaviours and attributes based on labels of masculinity (man) and femininity (woman).

For some purposes, such as HMRC reporting, data must be collected as a binary choice between female and male. This is also the case within the Fair Employment Monitoring Return in Northern Ireland and the Equality Duties Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (for public authorities).

Unfortunately, gender specific language can reinforce stereotypes with the effect of undermining certain people or groups. Historically in the English-speaking world, the language usage has evolved on the basis that humans are male. This has privileged men and often rendered women invisible or inferior. There is gender coded language, which is explained on GenderDecoder.com.

There is now recognition of a wider range of gender identities than just male and female, and inclusive language that recognises and includes everyone regardless of their gender identity should be used.

Gender identity is a personal, internal perception and so the gender someone identifies with may not match the sex that was recorded at birth (as in the case of a person who is trans). An individual may see themselves as a man, a woman, as having no gender, or as having a non-binary gender—where people identify as somewhere on a spectrum between man and woman. People have the right to self-identify, and those who reject the binary tick boxes, may describe themselves as non-binary or genderqueer.

Gender identity is often grouped with sexual orientation in the acronym, LGBTQ+ (which stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning with the + recognising that people may identify in a wide range of ways and prefer to select their own terminology). However, gender identity is very different from sexual orientation and therefore has been separated within this guidance.

Consider these principles:
- Use gender neutral language, including pronouns and examples where possible. This gender neutral approach avoids stereotyping people according to their gender and making offensive mistakes.

- Don't assume gender in written correspondence. Write Ms/Mr/Mx on written correspondence when you do not know the gender of the recipient or if the full name is known, address to the name without a title.
- In conversation, if you don't know a person's gender or how they identify, use gender neutral language until they indicate their gender or terms they would like you to use. It is important to take cues from the individual. If someone shares their trans identity with you, you should ask them how they would prefer you to address them, which pronouns they prefer, and, if relevant to the situation, what language they prefer.
- Only use the acronym LBGTQ+ when the communication relates to both sexual orientation and gender identity.
- When giving people a choice of gender options on forms, human resource systems, and so on, give inclusive options such as female/male/non-binary/other (please specify)/prefer not to say for gender identity and a full list of title options in alphabetical order, including Mx.

Say:
- "Humankind", "chairperson", or "spokesperson" instead of "mankind", "chairman", or "spokesman".
- "Actor" or "manager" instead of "actress" or "manageress".
- "Women" or "woman" instead of "females".
- "Pilot" or "nurse" instead of "female pilot or "male nurse".
- "Team", "everyone", or "customers" instead of "ladies", "girls", or "guys" as collective terms.
- "Welcome friends and colleagues" instead of "welcome ladies and gentlemen".
- "Partner" or "spouse" instead of "husband" or "wife" unless you know the individual's gender.
- "People who are trans", "person who is non-binary", "person who is gender-queer", or "person who is gender-fluid" instead of "the transgender".
- "Gender identity" instead of "gender reassignment" unless referring to specific provisions of the Equality Act 2010.
- "Transition" or "transitioning" instead of "sex change", "pre-operative", or "post-operative" as this is a personal and individual process that may not be medical.
- "They", "them", "theirs", instead of "he", "she", "hers', "his" when speaking to a person who is non-binary, who prefers non-binary pronouns or where the gender is not confirmed.

It is never acceptable to:
- Use the terms tranny, he/she, or she-male, as these will cause offence.
- Use language on job descriptions that suggests the gender of the job holder.
- Ask if someone is trans.

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Think carefully before:
- Using the term queer, as historically it was viewed as a derogatory word but has been reclaimed as an umbrella term by some members of the LGBTQ+ community. Therefore, make sure you consider your audience before using it.
- Using the term transexual, as the term is outdated and might offend some trans people. However, it is acceptable when referring directly to provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and the protected characteristic of gender reassignment that mentions the term. It is also acceptable when an individual identifies as being transexual and communicates this to you.

Inclusive language about race and ethnicity

Ethnic and racial labels, names, and expressions can be created and used to portray certain groups as inferior or superior to others. Sometimes this usage is unintentional and stems from the continued dominance of white mainstream culture; other times, it is deliberately used to marginalise, demean, and discriminate. Note that the Equality Act 2010 uses the term race (not ethnicity) when referring to the protected characteristic.

Historically, the acronyms BAME (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic) and BME (Black Minority Ethnic) have been used as an umbrella categorisation to describe people from certain ethnic minority groups—essentially people who were not white. Think carefully before using these umbrella categorisations (as well as the expressions "person of colour" or "people of colour", or the acronym POC), as some people might find it offensive (even though it can also be seen as an empowering term preferred by in certain instances). Also try to avoid any expression that uses black in a negative way, for example, "black sheep", "blacklisted", or "black mark".

It is worthwhile to note that the acronym GRT (for Gypsies, Roma, and Travellers) may be considered contentious for some as well. While recognising the wide use of the bracketing term, Travellers Times explains, 'The group term "GRT" wasn't invented by the people it describes. It is as much a result of political convenience and shared disadvantage as it is of actual cultural overlap.'

In December 2021, the UK Government stopped using umbrella terms and began referring to ethnic minority groups (or underrepresented ethnic groups) individually rather than as a single group.

Say:
- "Minority ethnic group", "people from ethnic minority groups", or "people from underrepresented ethnic groups" instead of "minority group" or "visible minority".
- "Person who is Asian" or "person of Asian heritage" instead of "Asians".
- "Mixed race" or "mixed heritage" instead of "half caste".
- "Someone from the traveller community" instead of "gypsy".
- "The doctor" instead of "the Indian doctor".

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- "Family name" and "given name" instead of "surname" or "first name" (this is more inclusive as in some countries the family name is presented first and the given name second).

It is never acceptable to say:
- "Coloured person", "half caste", "half breed", or "pikey".

Inclusive language about disability

The linguistic portrayal of disabled people has traditionally emphasised the disability rather than the person and can be used to create a homogenous group of people with disabilities. Disabled people can be inappropriately seen as helpless, to be pitied, and to be cared for rather than as equal and contributing members of society.

Consider these principles:
- Focus on ability not disability. Use positive language that empowers people and treats them with dignity and respect.
- Do not use language related to disability (such as bipolar, PTSD, OCD, paranoid, or lame) to describe everyday behaviours in those without diagnosed conditions.
- Avoid using language on job descriptions that could exclude some disabled people.

It may be beneficial to base your organisation's inclusive language decisions on the social model of disability. This model states that people are disabled by societal barriers such as language, not by their condition, impairment, or difference. For more information on this concept, see the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman's Introduction to the Social and Medical Models of Disability.

How anyone chooses to talk about their condition, impairment, or difference is up to them. With that in mind, it may be helpful to survey employees to gauge their personal preferences and then defer to those responses in instances when that information is required. Keep in mind this option may not be compatible with certain data collection measures.

In any instance, it's best not to make general assumptions about inclusive language preferences, since not everyone will agree. However, it is advisable to avoid the following terms:
- Wheelchair-bound as it conveys an image of the person as being dependent and ignores the reality that a wheelchair enables someone to live an active life.
- Handicapped as it has negative connotations and focuses on disability instead of ability.
- Invalid as it suggests that disabled people are less valid than those without.
- Sufferer as it conveys an image of the person as a victim and places the emphasis on the condition rather than the person.
- Mentally disturbed or crazy as this undermines mental health illnesses.
- Mentally handicapped or special to describe someone with a learning disability.

Inclusive language about religion or belief

As a traditionally Christian country, the UK has adopted some language that some people might not realise is linked to religion. Using this Christian centric language may exclude people who respect different religions and beliefs. If you ask someone about religion or belief in a questionnaire, list the answer options in alphabetical order and include the option to say no religion.

Say:
- "Religion or belief" instead of "faith".
- "Given name" instead of "Christian name".
- "People who recognise the Muslim religion" or "person from the Muslim community" instead of "Muslims".

Inclusive language about sexual orientation

Sexual orientation is simply about who we are attracted to, or not attracted to, in the case of someone who is asexual. The enduring bias in society against lesbian, gay, and bisexual people makes many people feel invisible, marginalised, and inferior to heterosexual people. This means an organisation's communications should ensure the language it uses to refer to sexual orientation is accurate and appropriate so that it does not exclude people or cause offence.

Although sexual orientation is often combined with transgender identities in the acronym LGBTQ+, sexual orientation is different to gender identity, which is why they have been separated within this guidance. Only use the acronym LBGTQ+ when the communication relates to both sexual orientation and gender identity. If the communication only relates to sexual orientation and not gender identity, use a more factually correct term.

Say:
- "Sexual orientation" instead of "sexual preference".
- "Gay", "gay man", "person who is gay" or "person who is bisexual" instead of "homosexuals" or "bisexuals".
- "Heterosexual" instead of "straight".
- "Partner" or "spouse" instead of "boyfriend", "girlfriend", "husband" or "wife" unless you know the individual involved and their preferred language.
- "Parent" instead of "mother" or "father" unless you know the individual concerned and their preferred language.

It is never acceptable to say fag, bent, dyke, homo, or queen.

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Inclusive language about marriage and civil partnership

Marriage and civil partnership are legally recognised unions in the UK to both same sex and heterosexual couples. In a marriage, the partners usually (but not always) refer to themselves as husband/husband, husband/wife, or wife/wife. In a civil partnership, the partners tend to reference their respective other as a partner, although they could use the term civil partner. When possible, use gender neutral language.

In the UK, female titles may refer to a woman's relationship status (for example, Mrs, Miss, and Ms). You should use Ms when addressing a letter instead of Mrs or Miss unless you know the preferred title of the recipient.

Say:
- "What is your relationship status?" instead of "what is your marital status?"
- On a form, "what is your marital or civil partnership status?" instead of "what is your marital status?" and give multiple answer options:
  - Civil partner/married
  - Dissolved civil partnership/divorced
  - Single
  - Widow/widower/surviving civil partner

Inclusive language about pregnancy and maternity

Although families come in many shapes and sizes, some people still hold traditional views about gender roles within families. These assumptions and stereotypes still underpin some of the language used and can put certain people at a disadvantage.

While many people who are pregnant or have given birth identify as women, there are some non-binary, trans, and intersex people who do not identify as women and who may become pregnant and give birth. You should try to use gender neutral language where possible.

Say "expectant parents" or "pregnant people" instead of "expectant mothers" unless you know the gender identity of the individual. Never ask someone if they are pregnant.

What you can do

Organisations with inclusive cultures use inclusive language and are:
- Mindful of the diversity of their audience;
- Skilled at understanding cultural and language barriers;
- Expert at anticipating the communication needs of their audience; and
- Aware of—and able to avoid—the words and phrases that could cause offence or prevent the desired message from being received

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Inclusive language can be embedded in an organisation by:
1. Reviewing the diversity, equality, and inclusion (DEI) related language being used in corporate communications and agreeing to the correct tone and content.
2. Considering how messages will be received differently by different people (for example those with different gender identities, ages, ethnic origins, disabilities, sexual orientations, and religions) to identify any barriers. The best way to achieve this goal is to involve a range of people from different backgrounds and with different communications requirements from inside and outside the organisation. This will enable you to draw up an approach to inclusive language that is fit for purpose and appropriate for your audience.
3. Using the inclusive language options in Word (under Editor settings) to review content for inclusive language.
4. Provide training on inclusive language to your people and guide them on how to talk about differences.
5. Encourage people to challenge language that they believe is not appropriate and give them the skills to do so.

Conclusion

Effective communication in the workplace relies on language that avoids discriminating, excluding, or undermining individual groups. Therefore, an organisation must proactively address and monitor the language that is used to ensure the desired messages are understood as intended.

The information contained within this resource was accurate at the time of its publication. It was created in April 2022 and last revised in October 2022.

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Additional enei resources

- Employer Guide: Equality Act 2010
- Employer Guide: Inclusive Communication
- Employer Guide: Inclusive Recruitment
- Infographic: Inclusive Recruitment
- Quick Guide: Inclusive Recruitment

External resources

- Equality Commission, Fair Employment Monitoring Return in Northern Ireland
- GenderDecoder.com
- Gov.uk, Inclusive language: words to use and avoid when writing about disability (March 2021)
- Gov.uk, Writing about ethnicity (December 2021)
- How-to Geek, How to Check for Inclusive Language in Microsoft Word
- Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, Introduction to the Social and Medical Models of Disability
- The Equality Office, Equality Duties Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998
- Travellers Times, About

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)

Context

1. The Public Sector Equality Duty as set out under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires Rugby Borough Council when making decisions to have due regard to the following:
    *   eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act,
    *   advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not,
    *   fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

2. The characteristics protected by the Equality Act are:
    *   age
    *   disability
    *   gender reassignment
    *   marriage/civil partnership
    *   pregnancy/maternity
    *   race
    *   religion/belief
    *   sex/gender
    *   sexual orientation

3. In addition to the above-protected characteristics, you should consider the crosscutting elements of the proposed policy, such as impact on social inequalities and impact on carers who look after older people or people with disabilities as part of this assessment.

4. The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) document is a tool that enables RBC to test and analyse the nature and impact of what it is currently doing or is planning to do in the future. It can be used flexibly for reviewing existing arrangements but in particular should enable identification where further consultation, engagement and data is required.

5. The questions will enable you to record your findings.

6. Where the EqIA relates to a continuing project, it must be reviewed and updated at each stage of the decision.

7. Once completed and signed off the EqIA will be published online.

8. An EqIA must accompany all **Key Decisions** and **Cabinet Reports**.

9. For further information, refer to the EqIA guidance for staff.

Equality Impact Assessment

Service Area	**Legal & Governance**
Policy/Service being assessed	**Use of Councillor Suffixes**
Is this is a new or existing policy/service? **If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment**	**N/A**
EqIA Review team – List of members	**N/A**
Date of this assessment	5th March 2024
Signature of responsible officer (to be signed after the EqIA has been completed)	*Aftab Razzaq*

A copy of this Equality Impact Assessment report, including relevant data and information to be forwarded to the Corporate Equality & Diversity Advisor or Chief Office Legal & Governance.

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Details of Strategy/ Service/ Policy to be analysed

Stage 1 – Scoping and Defining	
(1) Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the Strategy/Service/Policy (or decision)?	• The proposed recommendation is a clear commitment on the part of the Council in acknowledging consistency when addressing all Councillors. It is also important to note any deviation from this consistency is also implemented in accordance with specific requests from Councillors.
(2) How does it fit with Rugby Borough Council's Corporate priorities and your service area priorities?	• This fits with CANDO values in particular Nurture People, Act with Respect, Own It and Driving Excellence • Corporate Strategy – Outcome 4: Organisation
(3) What are the expected outcomes you are hoping to achieve?	The implementation of consistency and inclusivity in addressing all Councillors. This is demonstrated within the use of inclusive language as set out within Appendix 1 of the report and an effective discharge of the Council's responsibility within the Equalities Act 2010.
(4)Does or will the policy or decision affect: • Customers • Employees • Wider community or groups	This will directly affect all Councillors. It will indirectly affect all employees with the requirement and expectation in how Councillors should be addressed.
Stage 2 - Information Gathering	As a minimum you must consider what is known about the population likely to be affected which will support your understanding of the impact of the policy, eg service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).
(1) What does the information tell you about those groups identified?	Information gathered set out within the report demonstrates that other Councils do not use such suffixes.

(2) Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the strategy/ service/policy you want to implement? If yes, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?	• This matter was considered and debated through the original motion at Full Council. Thereafter there has been consultation and consideration by the Council's Equality & Diversity Steering Group.
(3) If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary.	As set out above all Councillors have been involved in this matter through Full Council and thereafter the Equality & Diversity Steering Group.
Stage 3 – Analysis of impact	As set out within the original motion and subsequent debate the proposed recommendation allows the Council to implement a more inclusive approach. It will move away from incorrect assumptions and have a positive impact upon the specific groups set our below.

(1)Protected Characteristics	**RACE**	**DISABILITY**	**GENDER**
From your data and consultations is there any positive, adverse or negative impact identified for any particular group, which could amount to discrimination?	N/A	N/A	Positive impact expected
	MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP Positive impact expected	**AGE** Positive impact expected	**GENDER REASSIGNMENT** Positive impact expected
If yes, identify the groups and how they are affected.	**RELIGION/BELIEF** N/A	**PREGNANCY MATERNITY** N/A	**SEXUAL ORIENTATION** Positive impact expected

(2) Cross cutting themes (a) Are your proposals likely to impact on social inequalities e.g. child poverty, geographically disadvantaged communities? If yes, please explain how? (b) Are your proposals likely to impact on a carer who looks after older people or people with disabilities? If yes, please explain how?	None.
(3) If there is an adverse impact, can this be justified?	N/A
(4)What actions are going to be taken to reduce or eliminate negative or adverse impact? (this should form part of your action plan under Stage 4.)	• Any form of monitoring will be dealt with by the Equality & Diversity Steering Group.
(5) How does the strategy/service/policy contribute to the promotion of equality? If not what can be done?	This is made clear within the report and this overall impact assessment. It ensures inclusivity as set out within Appendix 1 of the report and the overall objectives when the motion was passed by Full Council.
(6) How does the strategy/service/policy promote good relations between groups? If not what can be done?	Overall good relations across Councillors as it promotes equality and inclusivity.
(7) Are there any obvious barriers to accessing the service? If yes how can they be overcome?	• No Obvious barriers

Stage 4 – Action Planning, Review & Monitoring	
If No Further Action is required then go to – Review & Monitoring (1)Action Planning – Specify any changes or improvements that can be made to the service or policy to mitigate or eradicate negative or adverse impact on specific groups, including resource implications.	This will be the responsibility of the Equality & Diversity Steering Group.
(2) Review and Monitoring State how and when you will monitor policy and Action Plan	This will be the responsibility of the Equality & Diversity Steering Group

Please annotate your policy with the following statement:

'An Equality Impact Assessment on this policy was undertaken on (date of assessment) and will be reviewed on (insert review date).'