

DISABILITY ACCESS IN PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Committee name	Corporate, Finance & Property Select Committee
Officer reporting	Dave Grimshaw, Planned Works and FM Manager (Corporate Services)
Papers with report	None
Ward	All

HEADLINES

The report has been prepared at the Committee's request, to provide an overview of the Council's compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the responsibilities placed on us as a Public Sector Organisation under the Equality Duty.

Officers have worked with our Principal Access Officer, who is a member of the National Register of Access Consultants and are confident that the Council is compliant with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

To our knowledge, we have had no residents' requests for additional arrangements across any of our corporate sites. If any such requests are received, they would be fully investigated to ensure our buildings are compliant.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Committee:

- 1. Notes the findings in this report.**

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The Equality Act 2010 replaced the previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act and, by simplifying the requirements, made it easier for everyone to understand and to comply with the requirements.

The Equality Act 2010 is further supported by the Equality Duty which requires public bodies to consider the needs of all individuals in their day to day work. It encourages public bodies to understand how different people will be affected by their activities and recognises that disabled people's needs may be different from those of non-disabled people.

Officers have liaised with the LBH Principal Access Officer who carries out accessibility assessments and believe that all Council sites visited are fundamentally accessible and raise no concerns in terms of satisfying the Equality Act 2010.

This view is further endorsed by the lack of complaints and / or Members' Enquiries related to the

subject matter; however, officers remain vigilant.

Implications on related Council policies

A role of the Select Committees is to make recommendations on service changes and improvements to the Cabinet who are responsible for the Council's policy and direction and in this regard ensure that we are compliant with UK legislation and our own Equality and stronger communities policies.

How this report benefits Hillingdon residents

This report seeks to assure our residents and visitors that we continue to focus on our responsibilities under the Equality Duty by:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advancing the equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- Continuing to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not.

Financial Implications

Officers are not aware of any financial implications given our view of the levels of compliance with The Equality Act 2010 but it is important that the Committee considers cost effective proposals that benefit resident taxpayers in relation to this review, which would ultimately be determined by Cabinet as part of the Council's broader budget planning process.

Legal Implications

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society.

The Equality Duty is supported by specific duties, set out in regulations which came into force on 10 September 2011. The specific duties require public bodies to publish relevant, proportionate information demonstrating their compliance with the Equality Duty.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

'The essential guide to the public sector Equality Duty'