

September 2023

Draft Equity and Inclusion Policy – your questions answered

What is the policy about?

The purpose of the Draft Equity and Inclusion Policy is to outline the Council's approach to enabling people from all communities and areas of the city to have equitable access to our services.

The policy will ensure we put a lens of equity and inclusion across the Council's decision-making and the services we provide.

What is the scope of the policy?

This policy applies to the procurement, management, and delivery of Council services.

We expect all elected members, employees, volunteers and third parties/contractors carrying out work on behalf of the Council to comply with this policy.

Where can I pick up a copy of the Draft policy?

You can download a copy of the Draft Equity and Inclusion Policy [here](#), or visit your nearest Christchurch City Council Service Centre for a printed copy.

How do I make a submission on the Draft Equity and Inclusion Policy?

You can make an online submission [here](#). You can also visit your nearest Christchurch City Council Service Centre for a printed submission form with free postage, or phone Engagement Advisor Irene MacArthur on 03 941 6293 to submit over the phone.

How do you define...?

Equity: Equity is defined as “the quality of being fair or impartial” or “something that is fair and just”. Minority groups often have technically equal rights but are still treated unfairly due to unequal access to resources or opportunities.

There's a distinction between equality and equity: Equality means things are “the same” and equity means things are “fair.” It's possible that something can be equal but not equitable and, inversely, something could be equitable but not equal. Both have to do with the way people are treated.

People should have equity regardless of gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, disability, geographical location or socio-economic status.

Inclusion: This is when you provide equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized, such as those who have physical or mental disabilities and members of other minority groups.

Inclusion is ensuring that everyone has an equal opportunity to contribute to and influence every part and level of a workplace.

Accessibility: People have equal rights to access the physical environment, information, communication, and Council services.

Policy framework: A high-level statement of intent intended to influence how and what Council activities are delivered.

Policy strategy: A strategy is a high-level document that sets out a clear vision for the future and provides direction about how we're going to get there. It differs from a policy framework in that it's more targeted, rather than applying to all areas of activity, and is focused on bringing about change rather than influencing ongoing activity. The Draft Equity and Inclusion Policy is aligned with our [Te Haumako Te Whitingia Strengthening Communities Together Strategy](#).

How did the Draft Equity and Inclusion Policy come about?

We recently reviewed a number of the Council's outdated community-facing policies, to see which ones could be combined into one overarching policy.

The following policies have been incorporated into the Draft Equity and Inclusion Policy:

- [Ageing Together Policy 2007](#)
- [Children's Policy 1998](#)
- [Equity and Access for People with Disabilities Policy 2001](#)
- [Social Wellbeing Policy 2000](#)
- [Youth Policy 1998](#)

The review also identified three outdated, obsolete policies that we'll revoke as part of this project:

- [Community Van Policy 1990](#)
- [Early Childhood Education Policy 1998](#)
- [Winning Women Charter Policy 1995](#)

In this instance, the old policies are no longer fit for purpose and have been long overdue for review. As part of the review, we found they shared many similarities – they all detailed Council's commitment to:

- reducing barriers to accessing information, services and places;
- enabling participation; and
- ensuring our services meet the needs of various communities.

The Draft Equity and Inclusion Policy has retained the principles, intent, and commitment of the old policies.

What does that mean for my community?

Revoking old policies doesn't mean we're not supporting these sectors anymore – in this case, some are no longer fit for purpose or reflective of our current community. Using an equity lens ensures the Council has a consistent approach and will be more effective in identifying and supporting people's needs and aspirations.

Why is my community mixed in with other communities?

Our Strengthening Communities Strategy Framework commits to delivering better Services and improving outcomes for everyone – irrespective of income, age, gender, ability, ethnicity, religion, or location. We also understand that intersectionality is not only a feature, but a benefit of these communities.

What specific mahi will come out of this policy for my specific community?

This policy is a high-level statement of intent from the Council, and it will inform, influence, and act as a yardstick against work the Council does.

It names specific communities and encourages the Council to consider them in our initiatives, as well as the unintended impacts our work may have. We can use the policy as an overarching influence in process documents, guidelines, and staff manuals.

How does the Council comply with its policies?

The Council is required to comply with all its policies. Under section 80 of the Local Government Act 2002, the Council must identify any decisions that are significantly inconsistent with policy, and the reasons why, when the decision is made.