



# Scrutiny Review

## Equalities



## Interim Report by the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group

The task group was set up in July 2019 at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Since that meeting, the task group has met on two occasions, 31 July and 13 August.

The working party has done a scoping exercise.

- i) Looking at the current policy
- ii) Looking at current practice
- iii) Comparison with others

This is an interim report. The reasons for this are:-

- i) Human Resources was outsourced to North Yorkshire County Council in June 2018 – a service level agreement has been requested as part of our investigations.
- ii) It would appear that the present actions of Ryedale District Council in relation to equalities are 'woefully lacking' and probably not 'fit for purpose'.
- iii) The Single Equality Scheme (2010-2013) does not appear to have been reviewed since September 2010.
- iv) Current practice does not appear to include equalities impact assessments as part of reports presented to committees. One officer does them as a matter of course, others appear to put a minimum comment at the end of a report, but usually nothing.
- v) At the task group meeting on 13 August, task group members consulted the Equality Framework for Local Government LGA template. The framework rates local authorities on three levels for the provision of equalities:
  - 1. Excellent
  - 2. Achieving
  - 3. Developing

From our investigations so far, Ryedale District Council struggles to achieve significantly on the 'Developing' criteria. This is clearly not acceptable after a 10 year timescale and may expose the council to a higher risk of acting unlawfully.

## Next steps

The task group intends to:-

- i) Compare equalities provision with the family group of councils.
- ii) Compare equalities provision with neighbouring councils.
- iii) Invite representatives of North Yorkshire County Council to a future task group to address the Ryedale District Council equalities position.
- iv) Examine and question the Service Level Agreement in relation to policy and delivery.
- v) Gather information on progress from Ryedale DC officers