



# **Stafford Borough Council**

## **Single Equality Scheme 2009-2012**

**‘Respecting our communities’**

# Foreword

Over the years we have seen our societies become more complex and diverse. The population figures have grown and we are becoming more ethnically diverse with new patterns of migration affecting previously homogenous communities. Our communities are also getting older which will have an enormous impact on our future service delivery.

Previous equality legislation has brought us a long way and has helped to challenge much discrimination and prejudice in our societies. However, in saying that, there are still big equality gaps and now Councils and their partners have a good opportunity to challenge inequality, to ensure that everyone has an equal chance in life and to respond to the diverse needs of the communities they serve.

This Single Equality Scheme brings together the <sup>1</sup>three existing equality and diversity schemes and action plans into one document. The Scheme has been written to demonstrate that equality and diversity are at the heart of what we do.

To ensure the absolute success of this Single Equality Scheme it is important that it has both the support of Cabinet, Leadership Team and engagement at every level in every part of the Council.

Therefore, we wholeheartedly support this Single Equality Scheme as a means of ensuring our services, strategies and policies meet the needs of our communities, staff and stakeholders.

**Councillor Mike Heenan**  
**Leader of the Council**

**Ian Thompson**  
**Chief Executive**

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<sup>1</sup> The Race Relations (Amendment) Act, 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, and the Equalities Act 2006

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## Introduction

We all need to work together to positively reinforce the benefit from having diverse communities that help to not only enhance the services that we deliver but also our reputation.

We understand delivering services to our communities that are based upon local need is crucial so it is important that this Scheme not only raises the awareness of diversity in our communities but also promotes equality in the delivery of all our services. We recognise that we cannot do this without the help and support of our elected members. Our elected members not only represent, but are the 'voice' of our community. As leaders of our community, they are the people who will know and understand the diversity of the wards they represent and the importance of delivering services that are representative of the people living in their wards. We will endeavour to work closely with all our members in the delivery of this Single Equality Scheme (SES).

The Equality Bill 2009, which was published in April of this year streamlines the law by distilling nine pieces of legislation into one single Act and creates a single new Equality Duty on public bodies. In response to this Stafford Borough Council has produced this Single Equalities Scheme which, addresses the statutory duties introduced by the following pieces of UK legislation;

- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000;
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005;
- Equality Act 2006.

It also sets out our commitment to diversity and equality under each of the equalities strands over the next three years:

- Race
- Gender
- Disability
- Sexual Orientation
- Religion or Belief
- Age

This equality scheme is underpinned by a comprehensive Equality Action Plan (appendix one), which explains how we aim to implement the scheme, raise awareness and migrate over to the new Equalities Framework for Local Government. As an Authority we are currently at Level Two (self assessed) of the Local Government Association Equality Scheme and will migrate over to the new standard at Level One 'Developing'.

## **Our Commitment**

Stafford Borough Council is committed to promoting diversity and equality of opportunity to everyone it comes into contact with. Inclusivity is at the heart of all our core values and is explicitly expressed in our Six-year Corporate Plan which drives forward the delivery of our four main priorities:

- Prosperity for All
- Cleaner, Greener, Safer Communities
- Health and Wellbeing
- Leading and Delivering

This scheme also underpins the vision contained in our Stafford Borough Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2020:

'Improving the quality of life for our communities by making the Borough a safer, healthier, cleaner and more sustainable place for all to live, learn, work and invest in.'

We realise that this vision and our four main priorities can only be achieved if we ensure that we promote equality for all groups of people and eliminate discrimination and harassment both in our role as an employer and as a provider of services.

## **Why a Single Equalities Scheme?**

Since the early 2000's, like most public authority bodies, we have had a statutory duty to publish Equality Schemes. The Race Equality Scheme was published first, then the Disability Equality Scheme and more recently the Gender Equality Scheme.

We believe that by having one single scheme it will:

- Promote the equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination and harassment
- Help to integrate equality into our everyday work and service delivery
- Streamline the monitoring and accountability of all the actions that the Council will take to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination and harassment;
- Ensure that by increasing the equality of opportunity for one group is not achieved at the detriment of another group.

This scheme should be seen as a living document, one that will instil change, drive forward our priorities and celebrate success.

## About us

Stafford Borough is located in the heart of Staffordshire and is the County's largest district geographically stretching across 59,187 hectares. Predominately rural; its economic scale score of 84.71 ranks it as medium size by British standards. Stafford's share of public sector workers lies above the British and West Midland's average, as a consequence of Stafford's status as the county's administrative centre.

Since 2003 the population has risen by 2.3% and currently sits at 124,700, 3% of which are Black and Minority Ethnic (BME). Of the 124,700 figure 21,300 are aged between 0-15 years; 75,500 are working age (15-64 years) and 27,900 are classed as older people. Both nationally and locally, the population is ageing and the over 60's population figure is expected to rise over the next twenty years by approximately 23%.

*(Source: Office for National Statistics, Registrar General's Mid Year Population Estimates 2008)*

The mixed geographic configuration of the Borough gives rise to a number of challenges within our community, such as rural isolation and access to opportunities. There are notable pockets of deprivation within some of our urban areas that have high percentage of teenage pregnancy; income and employment deprivation; and children who are low achievers. Raising the general level of prosperity within the Borough by improving access to opportunities and services will assist in overcoming many of these issues.

In terms of community cohesion and people getting on well together from different backgrounds – the results of the recent Place Survey were very positive for Stafford Borough (+57%). The results for people feeling that they have been, or are, treated with respect and people feeling safe are average and we recognise there is further work to be done in these areas. Migrant figures indicate that over the past three years there has been a steady increase of people coming into Stafford Borough from Eastern Block Countries and this is projected to increase over the next few years. This means that our Borough will become more richly diverse and we will need to ensure that services we deliver do not have a negative impact on the residents living here.

## **Legislative Context**

The Equality Act places a statutory duty on all public authorities and internal providers of goods and services when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment;
- Promoting equality of opportunity;
- Promoting good community relations and positive attitudes

Employers are required to have equality schemes in place and to ensure the promotion of equality of opportunity for everyone. Any person or body affected by a failure to comply with the general duty by a public authority may take action through judicial review proceedings.

## **General Legislative Framework**

The Council has a commitment to abide by our legal obligations and duties including those defined under the following legislation:

- Equality Act 2006
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Sex Discrimination Act (1975) and Amendment Regulations (2003)
- Gender Reassignment Regulations 1999
- Employment Rights Act 1996 (those provisions relating to maternity leave and dependant carer leave)
- Maternity and Parental Leave Regulations 1999
- Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Race Relations Act Regulations 2003
- Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000

More specifically, the Council is also required to have due regard when considering the following:

## **Race Equality**

We will ensure that all people have the same rights of access to services and employment irrespective of racial, ethnic or national origins.

Under the Race Relations (Amended) Act 2000, we were required to produce a Race Equality Scheme and review it every three years. The **General Duties** under this Act require us have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between different racial groups

## **Gender Equality**

We are committed to promoting equality for all employees and members of the public in our role as an employer and as a provider of services in relation to gender.

The Gender Equality Duty [GED] is a legal obligation which came into force in April 2007. It was introduced by the Equality Act 2006, which in turn amended the Sex Discrimination Act 1975.

The **General Duty** requires us to:

- Eliminate unlawful sex discrimination
- Eliminate unlawful harassment
- Promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

## **Disability Equality**

Stafford Borough is committed to equality of opportunity for all, both as an employer and as a provider of services. We will promote equality for, and prevent discrimination against people with disabilities as users of our services, as our employees and as members of our community.

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, we were required to produce a Disability Equality Scheme. Stafford Borough Council's Disability Equality Scheme was published in 2006 and runs from 2006-2009.

The **General Duties** under this Act require us to:

- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under this Act
- Eliminate harassment of people with disabilities
- Promote equality of opportunity for people who have a disability
- Ensure that consideration is given to people who have a disability even where that involves treating them more favourably than other persons.
- Promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability
- Encourage participation from people with a disability in public life

## **Sexual Orientation/Transgender Equality**

In December 2003 the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations came into force making it unlawful to discriminate against, directly or indirectly, harass or victimise any member of staff because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation. Within the Regulations, sexual orientation is defined as:

- Orientation towards persons of the same sex (lesbians and gay men);
- Orientation towards persons of the opposite sex (heterosexual);
- Orientation towards persons of the same sex and the opposite sex (bisexual);

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 came into force on 30th April 2007 and made it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation in the provision of goods, facilities or services to the public or a section of the public.

The protection for transgender people is contained in the Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment Regulations) 1999 and the Equality Act (2006). It is unlawful to discriminate against a person for the purpose of employment or vocational training on the ground that that person intends to undergo gender reassignment, or is undergoing gender reassignment, or has at some time in the past undergone gender reassignment. This ensures that the various stages of the gender reassignment process, including the very initial stage, where an individual indicates an intention to commence gender reassignment, are covered by the Regulations. It is not necessary for all three circumstances to apply for discrimination to have taken place. Employers who breach the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 in respect of discrimination on gender reassignment grounds will be liable in the same manner they would, for example, for discrimination against a woman on grounds of sex.

In addition to this, discrimination and harassment in the provision of services and access to goods on these grounds became unlawful in December 2007 under the European Goods and Services Directive.

## **Religion and Belief Equality**

From 2 December 2003, when the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations came into force; it became unlawful to discriminate against workers because of religion or similar belief. The regulations also cover providers of vocational training.

<sup>2</sup>Religion or belief is defined as being any religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief. This does not include any philosophical or political belief unless it is similar to religious belief. Exceptions may be made in very limited circumstances if there is a genuine occupational requirement for the worker to be of a particular religion or belief in order to do the job or to comply with the religious or belief ethos of the organisation. It will be for the Employment Tribunals and other Courts to decide whether particular circumstances are covered by the Regulations.

The Equality Act (2006) extends this further by making it unlawful to discriminate against people on the grounds of religion or belief when buying services, renting a house or flat, schooling and public authority plans.

## **Age Equality**

Equality means ensuring that all individuals (irrespective of their age) have the opportunity to live in the way they choose, according to their values; that their different needs, situations and goals are recognised and respected; and that they are treated equally with fairness, dignity and respect. In order to achieve equality in its true sense, age discrimination and ageism must first be eradicated.

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 became effective from October 2006 and means that employers can no longer discriminate against employees on grounds of age. The regulations removed the upper age limits on unfair dismissal and redundancy and set a national retirement age of 65, making compulsory retirement below 65 years unlawful unless objectively justified. All employees have the right to request to work beyond 65 years of age if they wish to and the employer has a duty to consider such requests. These regulations do not affect State Pensions.

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<sup>2</sup> (Source: ACAS - Religion or belief and the workplace, 'Putting the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 into practice')

## **Other statutory duties**

In addition to this, the Council also has other specific statutory duties in relation to equalities and diversity. These are to:

- Publish a Single Equalities Scheme to show how we intend to fulfil our general and specific duties in relation to equalities and diversity;
- Outline how inequality is being addressed by ensuring that we carry out consultation on the likely impact of our proposed strategies/policies and changes in service delivery;
- Gather data against the six equality strands;
- Carry out Equality Impact Assessments for all new strategies/policies and changes in service delivery and publish them.

## **Equality Impact Assessments**

We need to understand whether our services are meeting everyone's needs and that people who need our services have access to them. To help us to do this we carry out an Equality Impact Assessment.

### **Why do we carry out Equality Impact Assessments?**

Section 49A(1) of The Disability Discrimination (Amendment) Act 2005 places a duty on Public Authorities to assess the impact of its policies and practices, or the likely impact of its proposed policies and practices, on equality for people who have a disability; this will be carried out in this Scheme through Equality Impact Assessments (EIA).

The new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) will specifically test outcomes of 'how well inequality is being addressed'. To tackle these issues, councils will need to demonstrate they know their communities. They will need to understand both their local community profiles and main 'equality gaps' often experienced by different communities.

Councils will therefore need to understand national equality data and where this can be supplemented by local data sources. Accessing and analysing this information will be crucial to delivery on a number of key national performance indicators (NIs).

### **What are Equality Impact Assessments?**

An Equality Impact Assessment is a way of deciding whether an existing or proposed policy, procedure, practice or service does (or may) affect people differently, and if so, whether it affects them in an adverse way.

Assessments will be carried out on new policies and services, as they are developed and over time on existing policies and services. All issues will be considered alongside the other five equality strands (race, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation and age).

A summary of the results of the Equality Impact Assessments, Action Plans, and consultation exercises will be reported as part of the annual review of this Scheme.

## The Legislation and Procurement Activities

The legislation makes explicit reference to the requirements and responsibilities regarding all procurement practices:

<sup>3</sup>**The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000**, which amended the Race Relations Act 1976, has important implications for public authorities. The amended Race Relations Act, the RRA, now outlaws discrimination in all functions, including procurement. It also gives Authorities a positive legal duty to eliminate discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good race relations.

The new legislation requires Authorities to take proactive steps to assess whether there is equality of opportunity for everyone and to make changes where this is not the case. Authorities must build relevant race equality considerations into their procurement processes and practices to ensure that all their functions meet the requirements of the Scheme.

**The Gender Equality Duty** - Public authorities are bound by the gender equality duty and it requires a three-pronged approach to procurement:

- Ensuring generally that when public money is spent it supports the promotion of gender equality
- Incorporating gender equality requirements into the obligations of contractors, where appropriate to the performance of the contract
- Incorporating gender equality into their procurement processes so far as is consistent with EU Rules and UK Regulations

**The Disability Equality Duty** - Public authorities need to ensure that works, goods or services provided through procurement are delivered in a way that takes account of the relevant content of the Authority's disability equality duty. Taking account of disability considerations in this manner will assist in the provision of optimized results. Not to do so may expose the public authority to legal liability.

Public authorities should recognise the scope within procurement to achieve certain disability equality aims including:

- to make services, buildings and facilities (such as equipment and software) more accessible to people with a disability
- to improve opportunities for people with a disability for independence and choice
- To increase employment opportunities for people who have a disability

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<sup>3</sup> (Source: The duty to promote race equality – Public Procurement and Race Equality, A guide for Public Authorities – Commission for Racial Equality)

The Council has just refreshed it's Procurement Strategy and as such will require larger organisations and partner agencies to provide evidence of their own commitment and compliance with equality and human rights legislation.

## **Our arrangements for Consultation**

Arrangements under the three main equality schemes are as follows:

- The Race Equality Scheme does not explicitly state that employees, service users and others should be consulted when drawing up the scheme, it merely puts the emphasis on public authorities 'setting out their stall' in respect of the scheme.
- On the other hand the Gender Equality Scheme requires public authorities to consult service users, employees and others in the preparation of the scheme.
- The Disability Equality Scheme requires public authorities to involve people who have a disability in the production of such a scheme.

Stafford Borough Council believe that it is crucial to involve all of the six equality stand stakeholders in the development, monitoring, reviewing and delivery of all its strategies/policies and service delivery.

In developing this Scheme we will ensure that we carry out a Borough wide consultation exercise with all stakeholders and ensure that it complies with the Stafford Borough Compact successor agreement.

We will set up an Equality and Diversity Champion Network across the Council with representatives from all of the service areas. This network will be responsible for the monitoring, reviewing and delivery of the equality priorities set out in the Action Plan.

## **Our Arrangements for Scrutiny**

The Scrutiny Function allows elected members to:

- Challenge decisions made by the Cabinet
- Provide a crucial check and balance
- Contribute to council policy development

The role of the Scrutiny Committee function is to:

- Challenge and hold to account the decision making process in the Council
- Monitor the performance of services
- Undertake in-depth reviews

## **Our commitment as an Employer**

The Council aims to promote equality of opportunity for all existing and potential employees, by avoiding working and recruitment practices or arrangements that are discriminatory and engendering a working environment that develops good practice, acts to eliminate prejudice and values diversity.

Employment issues covered include appointments, training, promotion, terms and conditions of service and termination of employment.

- All decisions relating to recruitment, training, promotion or termination will be made on a purely objective basis, relating to skills, experience and ability, and recorded on the forms provided. Guidance Notes on recruitment and selection procedures will be published on the intranet.
- Qualifications or conditions applied must be justifiable in terms of the demands of the job.
- Tests must be non-discriminatory and relate purely to the demands of the job.
- Applicants with a disability are guaranteed an interview if they meet the essential job related criteria; (the Council have the two ticks accreditation)
- Special needs will be met at interview, subject to prior notification and details and application forms will be available in large print and audiotape if requested;
- Necessary and reasonable adjustments will be made under Section 6 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 for new employees, and for existing employees who develop disabilities.
- Managers and staff involved in recruitment will receive mandatory training and guidance including awareness of equal opportunity issues including the need to encourage people from disadvantaged groups to seek employment with the Authority.
- All staff are made aware of their duty to ensure that the policy is adhered to. This will be highlighted at induction and reinforced by training, in particular Diversity training, and guidance as appropriate.
- Robust policies have been developed, re-defined and publicised as required, e.g. Bullying and Harassment Policy, Grievance and Disciplinary procedures, to ensure that everyone is treated without bias.
- The Council is currently working towards an objective job evaluation process.

## **Monitoring workforce diversity**

We will ensure that as a responsible Authority we will collect data on equality and diversity against each of the six equality strands. We will use this data to monitor progress against our targets; identify discrimination; assess the impact of changes in employment practices and policies and to assess equality of opportunity in learning and development.

## **Access to Information**

Stafford Borough Council is committed to ensuring that information made available to the public, its stakeholders and partners is as accessible as possible. We will ensure that this Single Equality Scheme is published on the website and available for download. We will ensure that we publish all of our Equality Impact Assessments and publish the results of any consultation and engagement activities.

We will ensure that information regarding all of our policies/strategies and plans is communicated to staff via 'everybody' e mails; the intranet, Team Brief and at team meetings. Our website and intranet continue to be the main vehicle for communication and we will make sure that it is, and remains to be, accessible for all people, in particular, those with visual impairments.

## **Monitoring and Reviewing the Scheme**

Progress against the priorities contained in the Action Plan will be monitored by the Customer Services Manager and reported to Cabinet/ Scrutiny and Leadership Team via our performance management report 'In Pursuit of Success'.

The Customer Services Manager will quality check all Equality Impact Assessments prior to publishing them on the website.

The scheme will run for the duration of three years and the action plan will be reviewed on an annual basis.

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## Appendix One – Action Plans

Priority Area 1 - Knowing our communities and equality mapping					
Ref	Project/ Initiative/Action	Responsible Officer	Performance Measure	Completion By	Outcome
1.1	Commission a profile of place	Norman Jones	Profile completed	October 2009	We have a greater understanding of the profile and needs of our communities to plan services and inform priorities
1.2	Develop and Integrate equality objectives into the 6-year Corporate Plan; Sustainable Community Strategy and Service Plans	Tracy Redpath Louise Bell	4 equality objectives identified	April 2010	Equality objectives are built into all high level strategic plans to ensure inclusivity and demonstrate equality in service provision.
1.3	Introduce a systematic monitoring of all service users by all six equality strands. (2.2 HI)  Promote awareness Implement a database Set targets	Susan Pote Mac McCoig	% of service users input into database	April 2010	Data is monitored and used to inform policies, priorities and to plan services more effectively.
1.4	Analyse and monitor the data to identify gaps and areas for further service development, promotion or targeting. 2.3 HI)	All Heads of Service	1xservice gap identified for each service area	October 2009	Under represented groups are identified and service design has been planned for them.

**Priority Area 2 - Place shaping, leadership, partnership and organisational commitment**

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Project/ Initiative/Action</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Completion By</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
2.1	Produce a Corporate Single Equalities Strategy and action plan. Action plan to include how the Council aims to migrate over to the new Equalities Standard. (2.1HI)	Tracy Redpath	Strategy and action plan completed	October 2009	There is a greater understanding of equality and diversity issues and a commitment to improving outcomes in these areas.
2.2	Develop a clear plan for progressing to level three of the Local Government Equality Scheme (2.5 HI)	Tracy Redpath Susan Pote	Plan completed	October 2009	There is a greater understanding of equality and diversity issues and a commitment to improving outcomes in these areas.
2.3	Equality champions to be identified in each service area (2.9 HI)	Susan Pote	8 Equality Champions identified	February 2010	Equality agenda is a high priority, awareness is raised and EIA's are completed on time.
2.4	Identify a Councillor 'champion' for Equalities and Diversity	Norman Jones	1 Councillor Champion identified	December 2009	Councillors are taking a direct and personal responsibility for promoting equality and diversity.
2.5	Refresh the 3-year timetable of Equality Impact Assessments	Susan Pote	Timetable completed	December 2009	EIA's are completed on time and actions built into service plans.
2.6	Work with partner agencies/third sector to develop joint equality strategies	Susan Pote	EIA's completed for 2 Strategic Partnerships	March 2010	Equality objectives built into the plans of 2 identified strategic partnerships

### Priority Area 3 - Community Engagement and Satisfaction

Ref	Project/ Initiative/Action	Responsible Officer	Performance Measure	Completion By	Outcome
3.1	Incorporate Consultation and Engagement Strategies and mechanisms of how to engage 'hard to reach' minority and marginalised communities into the Customer Services Framework (1.4 HI)	Susan Pote Will Conaghan	Annual consultation with carried out with groups representing the six equality strands	January 2010	There is a comprehensive framework in place to allow key stakeholders, community members, including the most vulnerable, to scrutinise and challenge performance on equality and diversity issues.
3.2	Review the composition of the People's Panel to ensure minority communities are represented (2.8 HI)	Susan Pote	% increase in membership of People's Panel across 6 equality strands	January 2010	People's panel is truly reflective of the community they live in.
3.2	Review and refresh Access Audit of all public buildings	James Davis	% of buildings are DDA compliant	November 2010	Buildings comply with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) – community satisfaction with public buildings

## Priority Area 4 - Responsive Services and Customer Care

Ref	Project/ Initiative/Action	Responsible Officer	Performance Measure	Completion By	Outcome
4.1	Customer Compliments; Complaints and Comments to be incorporated into the EDRM system and managed by the Customer Contact Centre (1.5 HI)	Susan Pote Robert Crockard	% reduction in Customer Complaints  % increase in Customer Satisfaction	January 2010	Customer Compliments, Complaints and Comments are streamlined and reporting mechanisms are more efficient enabling staff to provide a more effective customer service.
4.2	Update current 'Respecting Customers and Colleagues' training to incorporate more of an Equalities focus. (1.6 HI)	Wendy Jennings Susan Pote Tracy Redpath	2 x training events taken place	February 2010	Staff and members are more aware of equality and diversity issues.
4.3	Implement a programme of mandatory staff and member diversity training, addressing gaps in knowledge of particular communities such as BME and faith groups. (2.4 HI)	Wendy Jennings	X staff trained  X members trained	April 2010	Staff and members are more aware of equality and diversity issues.

### Priority Area 4 - Responsive Services and Customer Care

Ref	Project/ Initiative/Action	Responsible Officer	Performance Measure	Completion By	Outcome
4.4	Refresh the Customer Services Framework incorporating Complaints; Equalities; Customer Care (2.6 HI)	Susan Pote Tracy Redpath	% reduction in Customer Complaints  % increase in Customer Satisfaction	March 2010	There will be a more comprehensive customer services framework in place to enable key stakeholders to challenge the organisation and for the organisation to deliver a more effective customer service.
4.5	Establishing customer care training for all staff (1.6 HI)	Susan Pote Wendy Jennings	X staff trained	June 2010	Staff are more aware of issues and able to deliver a more efficient customer service.

**Priority Area 5 - A Modern and Diverse Workforce**

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Project/ Initiative/Action</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Completion By</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
5.1	Set appropriate corporate and service and or unit employment and pay-related objectives for race, gender, disability, age, religion and or belief and sexual orientation	Neville Raby Wendy Jennings		March 2011	Implemented a Single Status Agreement
5.2	Develop a Workforce Action Plan to support organisational development	Neville Raby Wendy Jennings	Action plan is in place	March 2011	

## Appendix Two - Performance Criteria for Equality Standard for Local Government

Performance Criteria	Level One	Level Two	Level Three
	Developing	Achieving	Excellent
<b>Knowing our communities and equality mapping</b>	The Authority has demonstrated clear plans to undertake equality mapping and understands the profile and needs of communities of interest in its locality.	It has undertaken equality mapping and has a good understanding of its communities, including the extent of inequality and disadvantage. It has used the information to inform corporate and service priorities.	It has good evidence of the equalities profile of the community based on national and local data that is regularly reviewed.
	It has developed information and monitoring systems that allow it to disaggregate data where appropriate and to assess progress in achieving objectives and targets. It reviews them in the light of changing needs, when necessary.	Equality objectives are integrated into the local authority's business and service planning processes	It is measuring progress on equality outcomes, is able to disaggregate data on relevant performance indicators and can demonstrate real outcomes that have improved equality in services and employment.
		All relevant data on service access is monitored against the equality strands.	It identifies the changing nature of its communities and their expectations and then prioritises its activities and explains its decisions.

Performance Criteria	Level One	Level Two	Level Three
	Developing	Achieving	Excellent
<b>Place shaping, leadership, partnership and organisational commitment</b>	Councillors and officers understand the significance of equality of opportunity in creating local areas that people want to live and work in. They provide clear and visible leadership in building partnerships to address inequality.	Councillors and officers take direct and personal responsibility for promoting greater equality and test themselves on progress by the outcomes they achieve.	Councillors and officers have a reputation for championing equality issues and ensure that the equality issues relevant to their communities are embedded in their sustainable community strategy, strategic plans, local area agreements (LAAs) and local delivery plans.
	The Authority has publicly committed to improving equality outcomes and the elimination of discrimination in both service delivery and employment based on race, gender, disability, age, religion and or belief and sexual orientation and other areas of disadvantage.	It has set appropriate corporate and service and or unit objectives to address persistent inequalities and to narrow the gap related to race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion and or belief, or other areas of inequality for service delivery based on impact assessments and consultation with internal and external stakeholders and partners.	It works with all strategic partners and the voluntary and community sector, acting as an advocate to achieve defined equality outcomes.
			It reviews its equality strategy and public duty equality schemes every three years and seeks innovative improvement challenges.
			Through its achievements, it is an exemplar of good practice for other local authorities and agencies and works with others to share best practice.

Performance Criteria	Level One	Level Two	Level Three
	Developing	Achieving	Excellent
<b>Community engagement and satisfaction</b>	Key internal and external stakeholders and community members are involved in and consulted on equalities issues.	Key stakeholders and community members, including those who are vulnerable and marginalised, are able to scrutinise and challenge performance on equalities issues	It provides good customer care by ensuring that services are provided by knowledgeable and well-trained staff who understand the needs of their communities.
			It has improving satisfaction and perception indicators from all sections of the community and staff.
			Equality groups are integrally involved in community engagement programmes.
			There are forums for all equality stakeholders to share experiences and evaluate the authority's progress.
<b>Responsive services and customer care</b>	The Authority is compliant with all legal requirements, including having all the public duty equality schemes in place.	It has set stretching equality priorities in consultation with partners in the public, voluntary and community sectors and these are reflected in its sustainable community and other relevant strategies, local and multi-area agreements, and local targets.	All parts of the authority can show tangible progress towards achieving outcomes which address persistent inequalities and narrow the gaps.
	The Authority has systems in place at corporate and service and or unit levels to ensure the delivery, review and scrutiny of its equality and cohesion priorities	It works with partners in the public, voluntary and community sectors to develop joint equality strategies.	

Performance Criteria	Level One	Level Two	Level Three
	Developing	Achieving	Excellent
<b>Responsive services and customer care</b>	The Authority has earmarked specific resources for improving equality practice.	It uses equality impact assessments (EqIAs) to review all major corporate and service changes in policy and regularly conducts service and employment EqIAs.	
	The Authority is carrying out both retrospective and prospective equality impact assessments	There are good practices of delivery in all the sections of the council, with few adverse impacts found in impact assessments. Where adverse impacts have been found these have been mitigated.	
<b>A modern and diverse workforce</b>	The Authority is clear about its workforce profile and has plans to ensure equal pay and to improve representation where appropriate.	It has set appropriate corporate and service and or unit employment and pay-related objectives for race, gender, disability and age, religion and or belief and sexual orientation.	It has implemented action for equal pay outcomes and demonstrates progress on under-representation, flexible working, access to training and development. It promotes an inclusive working culture based on respect.

## Appendix Three – Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy the following definitions apply:

- *Direct discrimination* occurs where a person is treated less favourably than another on grounds of his or her sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation.
- *Indirect discrimination* occurs where a provision, criterion or practice, which is applied generally, puts persons of a particular sexual orientation (real or perceived) at a disadvantage and cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- *Harassment* occurs where a person is submitted to unwanted conduct on grounds of sexual orientation with the purpose or effect of violating his or her dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for him or her.
- *Victimisation* occurs where a person receives less favourable treatment than others by reason of the fact that he or she has brought (or given evidence in) proceedings, made an allegation or otherwise done anything under or by reference to these Regulations.
- *Sexual Orientation*. The statement in the Regulations is that it means a sexual orientation towards a) persons of the same sex (this covers gay men and lesbians); b) persons of the opposite sex (this covers heterosexual men and women); or c) both sexes (this covers bisexual men and women). It is important to note that the Regulations and this Policy protects those who are perceived by others to be of a particular sexual orientation, whether or not they are. The scope of the Regulations and this Policy does not extend to any other sexual preference or to more specific sexual practices.
- *Heterosexism/ Homophobia*. Heterosexism is any prejudice and discrimination against individuals and groups who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or are perceived to be so. It is based on the assumption that everyone is or should be heterosexual. Expressions of dislike, contempt or fear based on heterosexism are usually known as homophobia.