

Equality Scheme

March 2011



Purpose of this Equality Scheme

This scheme sets out the steps we will be taking over the coming years to proactively promote equality through our roles as a service provider, community leader and employer.

It also enables us to set out our plans as to how we will meet the Equality Act 2010 in terms of both the general duties and the specific public sector duty.

A strong commitment to equality and diversity does not only have a strong moral argument, and legal obligations, but it also makes good business sense. As an organisation that is committed to understanding and shaping services around customers needs, we need to be able to recognise and adapt to the diverse nature of our customers.

This Equality Scheme will set out;

- Our nine Equality Strands, and an understanding of the community of Chorley
- Our processes for embedding equality and diversity
- Our commitments to meeting the general duty and the specific public sector duty
- An Action Plan for 2011/12

Our Equality Strands

We have identified nine equality strands. Each strand identifies a group of customers who share a similar characteristic, which is protected. These groups may need additional support or consideration in service delivery or policy development. The nine strands are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion and Belief
- Rurality
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

All of the strands, except rurality, are protected by law through the Equality Act as people who have protected characteristics. Chorley Council has chosen to recognise rurality as an equality strand because of the issues that people living in rural areas can face when accessing services.

As well as making sure that we meet the duties set out in the Equality Act, this scheme will ensure that we make consideration of the particular needs of different customers and residents.

Understanding our Community

Age**

0 – 4	6,100	5.83%
5 - 9	5,700	5.45%
10-14	6,000	5.74%
15-19	6,200	5.93%
20-24	6,000	5.74%
25-29	5,800	5.54%
30-34	6,100	5.83%
35-39	7,600	7.27%
40-44	8,500	8.13%
45-49	8,200	7.84%
50-54	7,100	6.79%
55-59	6,900	6.60%
60-64	7,600	7.27%
65-69	5,500	5.26%
70-74	4,200	4.02%
75-79	3,200	3.06%
80-84	2,100	2.01%
85+	2,000	1.91%

Broad Age Bands

0-15	19,000	18.2%
16-64 (Males), 16-59 (Females)	65,000	62.0%
65 and Over (Males), 60 and Over (Females)	20,700	19.8%

Disability

Disability or life long limiting illnesses *	19,000 (approx)	18.5%
16+ residents with a moderate disability****	11128	12.93%
16+ residents with a severe disability****	4280	4.97%
Rate of moderate to severe disability per 1,000 population 16+ ****	180/1000 (England 176)	
Physical or Motor Impairment (Incapacity Claimants)	4,730 Feb 2007	
Mental Health Issue	1,700	
Learning Disability	1,316-3,643	
Hearing Impairment- total	184	
Hearing Impairment – with speech	26	
Hearing Impairment – without speech	40	
Visual Impairment – partial	409	
Visual Impairment – complete	245	

Race***

White	(100,100)	96.2%
White British	98,200	94.4%
White Irish	700	0.7%
White Other	1200	1.1%

Mixed	(900)	0.9%
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	300	0.3%
Mixed White and Black African	100	0.1%
Mixed White and Asian	300	0.3%
Mixed Other Mixed	200	0.2%

Asian	(1,900)	1.8%
Asian or Asian British Indian	900	0.8%
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	700	0.7%
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	100	0.1%
Asian or Asian British Other	200	0.2%

Black	(5230)	0.5%
Black or Black British Caribbean	300	0.3%
Black or Black British African	200	0.2%
Black or Black British Other Black	23	0.02%

Other	(600)	0.6%
Chinese or other ethnic group Chinese	400	0.4%
Chinese or other ethnic group other	200	0.2%

Religion or Belief*

Christian	84,420	84.04%
Buddhist	197	0.20%
Hindu	179	0.18%
Jewish	46	0.05%
Muslim	647	0.64%
Sikh	47	0.05%
None	5,652	9.08%
Other Religion	138	0.14%
Religion Not Stated	5,652	5.63%

Rurality*

Urban	74,603	74.27%
Rural	25,846	25.73%

Sex***

Female	52,000	49.67%
Male	52,700	50.33%

Sexual Orientation*

Heterosexual	94,412 Est.*	94%
Homosexual	6,037 Est.*	6%
Households living in a same-sex couple		108

Source: ONS; * 2001 Census, ** June 2007 Mid Census Estimates (updated Sept 2009), *** June 2009 Mid Census Estimates (released Nov 2010) **** Lancashire JSNA, Lancashire County Council Adult and Community Services, *Disability in Lancashire Report*, Dec 2010, Source: Health Survey for England

Our Legal Duties

The Equality Act 2010 imposes duties on all public bodies, including the Council. There is the general equality duty and the specific public sector duty. The boxes below give some summary information about what the duties mean. This scheme supports the Council in complying with these duties.

The General Equality Duty

When exercising its functions (for example, making policies or delivering services), the Council must give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Act explains that having due regard involves; removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics; taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people; and, encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low. This may involve treating some people more favourably than others.

The Specific Public Sector Duty

As well as complying with the general duty, the Council must also comply with some specific duties. These are:

1. Publish information to demonstrate it complies with the general equality duty. This must be done by 31 July 2011.
2. Prepare and publish equality objectives to help it meet the aims of the general equality duty, and details of the engagement it undertook when developing the objectives. This must be done by 6 April 2012.
3. Publish information about the analysis it has undertaken to understand whether its policies and practices meet the general duty.
4. Publish information about how it engages with people who have an interest in furthering the aims of the general duty.

Ensuring equality issues are considered in our services

Chorley Council already does much to ensure that the needs of particular customers and residents are met, and that equality and diversity are considered in service delivery and policy making. This section outlines how we ensure that the needs of groups with protected characteristics are always considered.

Integrated Impact Assessments

Integrated Impact Assessments (IIA) assess the possible impact that a proposed policy, function or service may have on different groups within Chorley. Anyone who is designing or changing a service, or developing or changing a policy or procedure, is responsible for carrying out an impact assessment. Directors have overall responsibility for ensuring that impact assessments are undertaken and acted upon.

Policy and Communications can provide support to anyone carrying out an assessment, to make sure there is consistency across the organisation.

All new policies, functions or services will have to undergo an IIA as part of their development process. Existing assessments should be updated at least every two years.

The assessment involves assessing the policy, function or service against the following:

- Equality Strands
- Health
- Sustainability
- Reputational impact

Each assessment requires an action plan to be compiled from any actions identified through the assessment. These actions will be included in service improvement plans to ensure that they are completed.

How the Council Monitors Progress

All **Committee and Council reports** include details on equality implications of proposed recommendations, so that elected Members are aware of them when taking decisions.

Policy and Communications maintains an officer oversight and is accountable for ensuring implementation of the Equality Scheme. Human Resources and Organisation Development monitor and provide information about staff make-up, recruitment and other workforce related issues.

Roles and Responsibilities - The Executive Member for Policy and Performance has responsibility for equality and diversity. The Chief Executive is the lead Chief Officer from the management team. However, all elected Members and Chief Officers are responsible for ensuring that equality and diversity principles are reflected in all functions of the Council.

Sources of Support and Information

Policy and Communications ensures that information about customer groups is available on the loop for staff to use to inform integrated impact assessments. This includes population profiles which ensure that the specific needs of our customers and communities are accounted for when planning and delivering services.

The Council has a **Community Engagement Strategy** which sets out the approach we take to engaging with our communities.

The Council also has a **Consultation and Participation Strategy** which sets out the approach we take to ensuring that all members of our community are able to actively shape the Council's services through consultation and participation.

These are supported by a toolkit for staff which provides guidance on how to engage, including with people from different backgrounds.

The **Equality Forum** invites representatives from groups from all strands of diversity to participate in discussions about new policies and Council activities and raise any concerns with regards to policies and service delivery. Any member of the community is welcome to attend and take part in meetings.

In terms of **Staff Training**, Equality and Diversity (Knowing Your Customers and Communities) is built into the Council's induction process, with all new staff receiving training on equality and diversity and the Council's objectives and processes. Specific training is given as required, including one-to-one training sessions on integrated impact assessments.

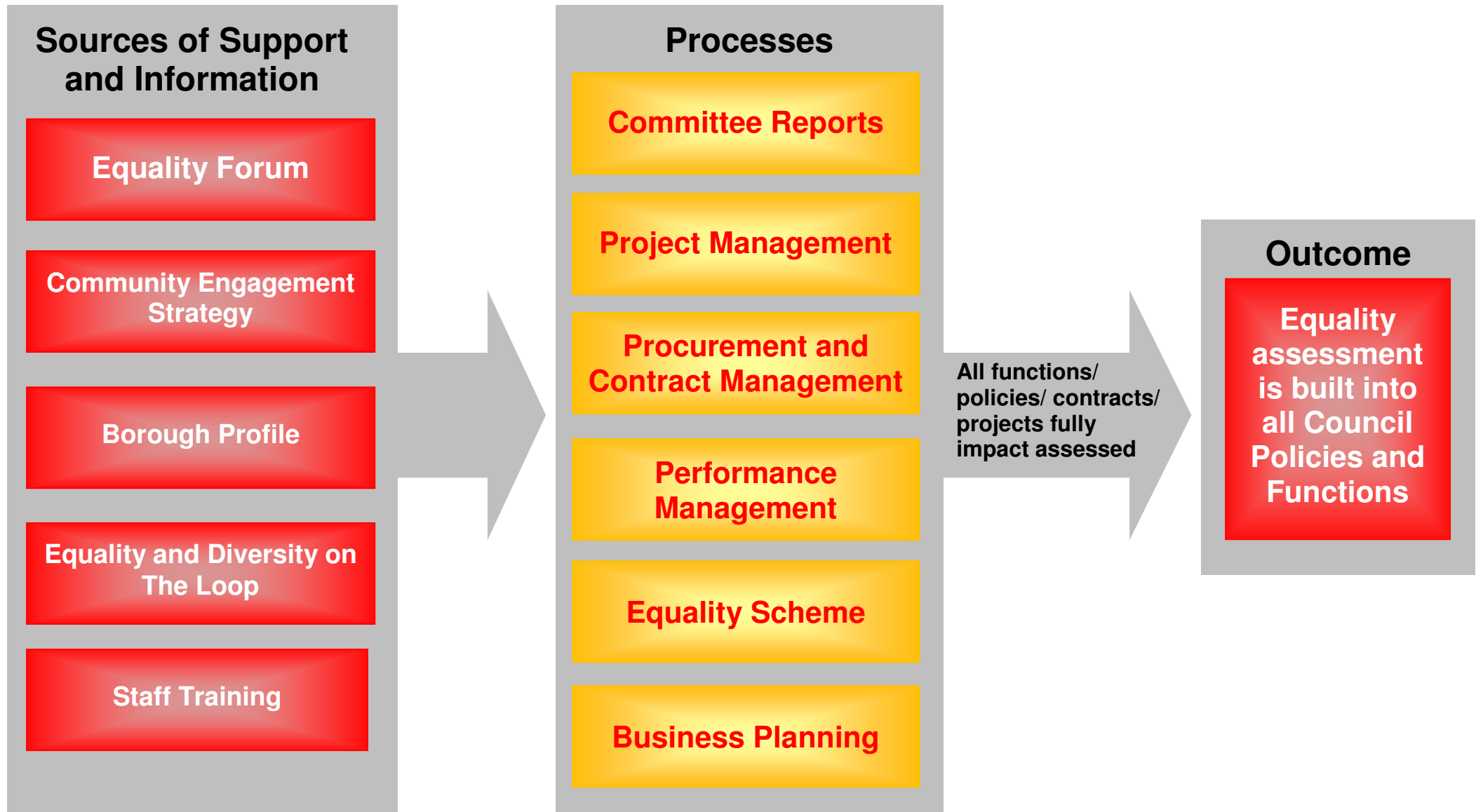
Processes

Equality and Diversity is built into the **Business Improvement Planning** cycle, with equality being considered in the development of Service Improvement Plans. Updates are given on equality and diversity in business plan monitoring statements, which are considered by Overview and Scrutiny on a six monthly basis.

Procurement and Contract Management: The process of undertaking equality assessments is built into the procurement and contract management framework to ensure that the equality and diversity implications of contracted out services is fully addressed. Guidance on embedding equality and diversity into the procurement process is available on the Council's website and covers all elements of the procurement and contract monitoring process from pre qualification questionnaire. The Council's framework for Partnership Working and Sustainable Procurement Policy explicitly address equality monitoring objectives.

In terms of **Project Management**, the requirement to undertake impact assessments is built into our Project Management Toolkit. For **Performance Management**, there are some key performance indicators that are built into our monitoring of services and monitoring of the workforce that are measured and reported – more information is in the Council as an employer section of this Scheme.

Processes for Embedding Equality and Diversity



The Council as an employer

The Council is committed to equality of opportunity at all stages of employment. This includes advertising jobs, the recruitment and selection process, appointment, promotion, training and development, disciplinary proceedings, grievance and complaints procedures. All Human Resources policies are reviewed and developed with due consideration to the implications of legislation, specifically the Equality Act 2010, and best practice relating to the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity, along with other equality and social inclusion issues.

Recruitment and Selection

The Council recognises its specific and general duties under the Equality Act 2010, in relation to our arrangements for monitoring of employees and potential employees. Equal Opportunities monitoring of applicants, shortlisted and successfully appointed candidates takes place at all stages of the recruitment and selection process. Monitoring covers the following areas and is taken from the equal opportunities monitoring form of the Council's application form:

- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Religion and Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Caring Responsibilities

Positive action measures will be taken where it is found, through monitoring of the work force and the recruitment and selection process, that there is under-representation of certain groups. Positive action measures may include the provision of training targeted at people from specific groups so that they may gain appropriate experience and skills to give them an equal opportunity in competing for jobs.

Pre-employment health-related checks; The Equality Act 2010 limits the circumstances when we can ask health-related questions before we have offered an individual a job. Consequently, the council will only ask a candidate to complete a pre-employment health questionnaire when a job offer has been made. The council will not ask health-related questions during the recruitment process unless it is to help us to decide whether we need to make reasonable adjustments, decide whether an applicant can carry out a function that is essential to the job, to monitor diversity among job applicants, to take positive action to assist a disabled person or if the post has an occupational requirement.

Training and Development

Staff from under-represented groups within the Council will be encouraged to participate in training and development initiatives. All employees will be given equal access to training and development opportunities that are identified via the Performance Reviews and PDP's.

Monitoring Equality in Employment

The Council also monitors and analyses data and information arising from:

- Performance Reviews (where there is benefit or detriment);
- Bullying and harassment cases;
- Disciplinary cases
- Grievances
- Mediation
- Capability

In addition, the Council monitors on a monthly basis the percentage of staff who consider themselves to have a disability and staff from BME backgrounds. The Council also has a facility to produce monitoring information on staff broken down by grade, age, disability, race and sex.

Monitoring these areas during recruitment, selection and promotion and in employment ensures that our services extend to those hard to reach and disadvantaged groups, that our processes are fair and within the remits of legislation, that people from all backgrounds are represented and have equality of opportunity and that we eliminate all forms of discrimination.

How will we meet the new duties?

An action plan for 2011/12

As well as continuing with our established procedures, we have developed an action plan to set out what we are going to in 2011/2012 to help us comply with the new duties.

Theme	Requirement	Action	Lead	Timescale
Assessing relevance	All functions need to be considered to determine which are most relevant to the duty	Undertake a mapping exercise of functions, including those that are contracted out, to create a priority list for action	Partnerships Manager	July 2011
Equality information	Publication of information, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on the effect that our policies and practices have had on people who share a relevant protected characteristic Evidence of analysis that we have undertaken to establish whether our policies and practices have (or would) further the aims of the general equality duty. Details of the information that we considered in carrying out this analysis. Details of engagement that we undertook with people whom we considered to have an interest in furthering the aims of the general equality duty. 	Develop a process for collating information on functions identified as relevant (including monitoring / consultation / analysis as part of the IIA's) and a plan for publication. To publish information broken down by protected group and to include performance information, access and satisfaction measures.	Partnerships Manager / Customer Services Manager	July 2011
		Identify any relevant information gaps and develop plans to fill them	Partnerships Manager	July 2011
		Employment Information - Workforce Monitoring – to prepare to publish information; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the race, disability, gender, age breakdown and distribution of the workforce indication of likely representation on sexual orientation and religion or belief, provided that no individuals can be identified an indication of any issues for transsexual staff, based on engagement with transsexual staff or voluntary groups gender pay gap information. 	HR	July 2011
Engagement	Publishing information about the engagement undertaken in this process	Develop the Engagement Toolkit to reflect the requirements of the Act. In addition, developing a process to collate the engagement activity that is ongoing for use in IIA's.	Partnerships Manager / Performance Improvement Officer	July 2011

Theme	Requirement	Action	Lead	Timescale
Equality Analysis	Looking at the equality information, and the outcome of engagement, in order to understand the effect of decisions on different protected groups.	Fully develop and implement a method to undertake the equality analysis – integrated impact assessments	Partnerships Manager	July 2011
Training	No specific duty but fits within the requirements that to exercise its functions staff must be aware of the duty's requirements – mainly the general duty	Develop a series of training events for Staff, Managers and Members on the content of the Equality Act 2010.	Partnerships Manager / HR	July 2012
Commissioning and Procurement	The Council is legally responsible for complying with the general equality duty in its timing and undertaking of procurement. The requirement applies to all procurement regardless of the value; the value of the contract may, however, impact upon the relevance and proportionality of equality considerations. There is no explicit specific duty relating to procurement.	Embed new equality considerations i.e. strands into Commissioning and Procurement Strategy, with guidance to determine the relevance of equality matters to the service and therefore the extent of the incorporation into the procurement process	Partnerships Manager / Procurement and Partnerships Manager	September 2011
		Review contractual obligations, including – specification to publish information about the compliance with the duty, and possibly equality outcomes – and minimum conditions as listed in the guidance	Partnerships Manager / Procurement and Partnerships Manager	September 2011
Business Planning and Reporting	No specific duty but fits within the requirements to publish objectives and how these are embedded within wider business planning processes.	Develop a process to run alongside the development of equality objectives to consider fit into business planning processes	Partnerships Manager / Performance Improvement Manager	December 2011
Equality Objectives	To prepare and publish equality objectives by 6 April 2012, and at least every four years after that. They must be specific and measurable, and set out how progress towards the objectives will be measured.	Develop a timetable to set equality objectives based on the information, engagement and analysis undertaken. Develop a plan for publication, monitoring and review.	Partnerships Manager	April 2012