

# Equality Scheme

Revised September 2007



## Our Vision for Equality

*Our vision is for a Borough in which inequality ceases to exist and where people from all communities live and work together with mutual understanding and respect. As a community leader, service provider and employer we will work to ensure that everybody is afforded equality of opportunity and good life chances and that our Communities are places where people get on well together and prosper.*

*As an organisation, which celebrates diversity, we recognise and embrace people's individuality and understand that our customers and employees come from different backgrounds and different circumstances.*

*This document sets out our approach to mainstreaming equality across the Council. This is a live document which will be developed and updated on an ongoing basis.*

*If you have any comments on this document or on our approach to equality, diversity and community cohesion generally please contact us by telephoning 01257 515325 or emailing [sarah.dobson@chorley.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.dobson@chorley.gov.uk)*

*Janna Hall .*



Cllr Peter Goldsworthy  
Leader of Chorley Council



Donna Hall  
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You can download this document in large print format from [www.chorley.gov.uk/communityandliving/equalityanddiversity](http://www.chorley.gov.uk/communityandliving/equalityanddiversity)

You can also ask for this document on audio CD, Braille or in other languages by calling 01257 515325.

ان معلومات کا ترجمہ آپکی اپنی زبان میں بھی کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ یہ خدمت استعمال کرنے کیلئے براہ مہربانی اس نمبر پر ٹیلیفون کیجئے:

आ माढितीनो अनुवाढ आपनी पोतानी भाषामां करी शकाय छे. आ सेवा सरलताथी मेजववा माटे कृपा करी, आ नंअर पर कृोन करे:

# Our Key Equality Objectives

## People

Ensure that everybody is able to participate fully and actively in community activities and is afforded equality of access to our services through our nationally recognised excellent customer contact centre.

## Business

Ensure that equality is central to the ambitious plans to take the Borough forward into the future

As Chorley moves forward as a forward thinking borough where people choose to invest we will ensure that equality of opportunity is afforded to all

## Neighbourhoods

Through the proper exercise of our duties as a Community Leader ensure that everybody living in our neighbourhoods are given equal life chances.

The provision of excellent services which are accessible and appropriate for all

## Business Improvement

Provide leadership to the in Chorley to ensure equality and diversity in employment.

## Policy and Performance

Provide organisational capacity for continuous improvement, learning and sharing existing good practice

Ensure that equality and diversity outcomes are central to the way in which the organisation operates.

Embed equality outcomes in the Council's Performance Management Framework

Work with our partners to develop Equality and Diversity practices across all Public Agencies and to develop Cohesive Communities.

Positively promote equality through our communications

## The Community of Chorley

The table below sets out a picture of Chorley's population in terms of volumes of residents which fit into each of the various categorisations of the strands of diversity.

The Community of Chorley	Number
<b>Gender</b>	
Female	50,476
Male	49,973
<b>Disability</b>	
Disability or life long limiting illnesses	19,000 (approx)
Physical or Motor Impairment (Incapacity Claimants)	4,730 Feb 2007
Mental Health Issue	1,700
Learning Disability	1316-3643
Hearing Impairment- total	184
Hearing Impairment – with speech	26
Hearing Impairment – without speech	40
Visual Impairment – partial	409
Visual Impairment – complete	245
<b>Religion</b>	
None	5,652
Christian	84,420
Buddhist	197
Hindu	179
Jewish	46
Muslim	647
Sikh	47
Other Religion	138
<b>Ethnic Background</b>	
<b>White</b>	
White British	96,832
White Irish	729
White Other	777
<b>Mixed</b>	
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	256
Mixed White and Black African	61
Mixed White and Asian	161
Mixed Other Mixed	116
<b>Asian</b>	
Asian or Asian British Indian	387
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	329
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	54
Asian or Asian British Other	64

<b>The Community of Chorley</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Black</b>	
Black or Black British Caribbean	208
Black or Black British African	52
Black or Black British Other Black	23
<b>Other</b>	
Chinese or other ethnic group Chinese	309
Chinese or other ethnic group other	91
<b>Age</b>	
0 – 4	5,517
5 - 7	3,691
8 –9	2,626
10-14	6,729
15	1,328
16-17	2,618
18-19	2,116
20-24	5,007
25 - 29	6,369
30 - 44	23,246
45 - 59	21,771
60 – 64	5,179
65 – 74	7,702
75-84	4,844
85- 89	1,100
90+	596
<b>Geography</b>	
Urban	74,603
Rural	25,846
<b>Sexuality</b>	
Heterosexual	94,412 Est.*
Homosexual	6,037 Est.*

This information provides a platform for equality activity and monitoring. This information does not tell us everything we need to know about these groups of people but helps us to think about impact and proportionality when considering our duties.

## **Race**

2001 census data shows that the majority of the population in Chorley are White British with Ethnic Minorities making up about 2.1% of the population. The data does not reflect more recent arrivals to the Country such as economic migrants. The census data is unlikely to include Gypsies and Travellers and others without permanent accommodation such as asylum seekers.

## **Disability**

The disability discrimination act protects people with a wide range of impairments including Alzheimer's, arthritis, learning disabilities or difficulties, depression, diabetes, HIV aids, cancer, visual impairments, hearing loss and many more.

At the last census 18.5% of Chorley's population classified themselves as having

At present disabled people do not have the same opportunities or choices as non-disabled people. Nor do they experience equal respect or inclusion. Treating disabled people in the same way as non-disabled people will not achieve this. To play our part in achieving equality for those with disabilities we have to go beyond treating disabled people ion non-disabled people alike, and instead take actions or make provisions that will enable disabled people to have the same opportunities in life as non-disabled people.

The Disability Discrimination Act defines a person as having a disability if 'they 'have a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal every day activities'.

The social model of disability asserts that it is 'social barriers' not impairments which cause disability. 'Disability Code of Practice states that 'The poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion experienced by many disabled people is not the inevitable result of their impairment or medical conditions, but rather stems from attitudinal and environmental barriers'.

## **Gender**

When addressing gender issues in equality we must ensure that we consider the impact our policies and practices can have on men, women, transgender and transsexual people.

The equal opportunities commission reports that sex discrimination in employment is still widespread with a significant pay gap between men and women still in existence and three quarters of working women found in just five occupational groups.

In terms of service provision we must work to ensure that services are not delivered in a 'gender blind' way which means they ignore the differential needs which men and women have.

## **Faith**

The 2001 census showed that 84,420 people in Chorley classify themselves as Christian, with 5,652 stating that they are not of any particular religion. The only other significant group is the Muslim community, which numbered 646 at the date of the last census. As with all other census data this presents a snapshot at a particular time and we are conscious that this profile may have changed in the interim. There are over 50 Churches across the Borough representing the various denominations of the Christian Church, along with a Mosque located in Chorley East.

Consultation and ongoing engagement with the faith community in Chorley is undertaken through the Interfaith Forum.

## **Age**

The age profile of Chorley's population is set out above. Chorley's population is, in common with the rest of the Country, aging we must think about how we as a community leader respond to the challenges this presents. There is an older people's forum in Chorley which is helping us to develop solutions to some of these issues.

## **Sexuality**

Based on national estimates produced by the department for Work and Pensions around 6% of the population are thought to be gay or bi-sexual, this has been translated into an approximation of around 6,000 people in Chorley. The Council consults with POUT a body of young gay, bisexual and lesbian people and the LGBT forum on its policies and functions.

## **Rurality**

Based on national categorisations from the Office of National Statistics- nine wards in Chorley fall into the rural classification (depending on whether the majority of the population falls inside a settlement of population 10,000 or more). Those wards in the borough which meet this rural classification are:

- Brindle and Houghton (village, hamlet and isolated dwelling)
- Wheelton and Withnell (village, hamlet and isolated dwelling)
- Pennine (village, hamlet and isolated dwelling)
- Chisnall (village, hamlet and isolated dwelling)
- Heath Charnock and Rivington (town and village)
- Lostock (town and village)
- Eccleston and Mawdesley (town and village)

Issues such as affordable housing, transport and accessibility of services impact upon these (and other less rural communities) and we must consider these implications when designing and delivering our services.



## How we will meet our specific duties

**There are three principle reasons that Chorley Council has produced this scheme:**

- i) To inform the public about what we are doing and what we plan to do to reduce inequalities and promote good relations in the Borough
- ii) To meet the specific duties of the Race Relations Act 1976, The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and The Equality Act 2006. (the Acts)
- iii) To meet the requirements set out in the Equality Standard for Local Government

The equality scheme covers seven elements of equality ethnicity, gender, disability, age, religion, sexuality and rurality. In committing to addressing each of these aspects of equality and diversity the Council will pay 'due regard' to the requirement to eliminate discrimination and promote equality in carrying out its functions.

The principles enshrined in the statutory duties, which place a duty upon public bodies to promote equality, will be applied to all seven strands of diversity.

A positive duty, which builds in equality at the beginning of a process rather than making adjustments at the end. This will bring about a shift from a legal framework which relies of individuals complaining about discrimination to one in which the Council becomes the proactive agent of change.

Due regard comprises two elements: proportionality and relevance. In all decisions and functions we will give due weight to the need to promote equality for each of these elements of diversity in proportion to its relevance.

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

Legislative requirements around equality provide standards for all public bodies to work to and a valuable common framework for action against which progress can be measured and benchmarked.

In response to the specific positive legislative duties placed upon us under the Race Relations Act 1976, The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and The Equality Act 2006 (the Acts) placed upon the Council we will specifically address the following points:

## **Race**

- a) Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- b) Promote equality of opportunity
- c) Promote good relations between persons of different groups

## **Disability**

- a) eliminate unlawful discrimination;
- b) promote equal opportunities;
- c) eliminate disability related harassment;
- d) promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons;
- e) encourage participation by disabled persons in public life.
- f) take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

## **Gender**

- a) to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- b) to promote equality of opportunity between men and women

## **Age, Religion, Sexuality and Rurality**

As we are aiming to be an excellent authority in terms of equality we are extending these duties to include:

- Age,
- Religion
- Sexuality
- Rurality

## This Equality Scheme will:

- State the functions and policies that have been assessed as being relevant to the general duty to promote equality in relation to race, disability, gender, age, religion, sexuality, rurality
- Set out the arrangements for meeting the duty by:
  - Monitoring policies for any adverse impact on race, disability, gender, age, religion, sexuality, rurality
  - Assessing and consulting on the likely impact of proposed policies on race, disability, gender, age, religion, sexuality, and rurality considerations,
  - Publishing the results of assessments, consultation and monitoring
  - Making sure that the public have access to information and services
  - Involve the those directly impacted up by the scheme in its production
  - Delivering Staff training

### **The relationship of the general duty to the specific duties set out in the Acts**

The specific duties are a means to an end, that is, the means by which the Council will ensure it meets its obligations under the duties.

This Equality Scheme sets out how the council intends to meet the general duty and other specific duties to promote Race, Disability and Gender Equality. Our clear aim of being an excellent Council and our response to the revised equality standard for Local Government (published.....) has resulted in a decision to apply the principles enshrined in legislation to age, religion, sexuality and rurality.

### **How we will monitor our progress in delivering our vision for equality**

To really progress our work on equality, we need to ensure that we measure our performance with the same rigour as we do other aspects of service provision.

## The Equality Standard for Local Government

Our key tool to measure our progress in mainstreaming equality is the Equality Standard for Local Government, which consists of five levels

- Level 1: Commitment to a Comprehensive Equality Policy
- Level 2: Assessment and Consultation
- Level 3: Setting equality objectives and targets
- Level 4: Information systems and monitoring against targets
- Level 5: Achieving and reviewing outcomes

Progress against this is agreed by Cabinet and reported in the Performance Agreement. We currently meet Level One of the Equality Standard and have committed to achieving Level Three by March 2008. This is an ambitious target and demonstrates our real commitment to delivering equality and diversity.

## How the Council Monitors Progress

The **Executive Cabinet** develops and implements policy on behalf of the Council. All major policies and projects that are taken to Cabinet detail the equality implications of what is being proposed.

All **Committee and Council reports** include details on equality implications of proposed recommendations.

The **Equality and Diversity Working Group**, maintains an officer oversight of objectives and target setting in all Directorate equality action plans, and will review corporate targets. This group will be accountable for ensuring implementation of the Councils Equality Scheme and will monitor and drive our attainment around the equality standard. This group provides a link to the **Equality and Diversity Steering Group**.

**Each Directorate has an Action Plan**, as outlined in this document which sets out the key actions to be taken to address Equality Objectives.

## Performance Indicators

The Council currently meets Level One of the Equality Standard for Local Government (a national Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) – more details at [www.lg-employers.gov.uk](http://www.lg-employers.gov.uk)). Progress against the standard will be reported annually in the Performance Agreement (BVPI2a). Progress against the Best Value Performance Indicator 2b, the duty to promote race equality, is also reported in the Performance Agreement, the current figure (2004/05) being 79%. Other BVPIs, together with targets, relating to equal opportunities in employment, are also included in the plan.

## **Business Improvement Planning**

Equality and Diversity Outcomes are built into the Business Improvement Planning cycle, with all equality actions incorporated in Directorate Business Improvement Plans (BIPs), along with consultation and equality impact assessments. The Business Improvement Plan Monitoring Framework, part of the Council's performance management framework sets out a requirement to provide quarterly updates on progress around equality and diversity outcomes into quarterly monitoring statements.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Members and Chief Officers are ultimately responsible for ensuring that equality and diversity principles are included in all functions of the Council. Operational responsibility for the Corporate Equalities Plan and Equality Scheme is co-ordinated by the Policy and Performance Directorate with the Human

## **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.

All staff have received training on the process of undertaking Equality Impact Assessments.

Ultimately all employees and Members of the Council have an individual responsibility for Equality and Diversity and promoting good race relations. Any identified training needs will continue to be identified via the Performance Management process. Corporate requirements for all employees and Members will continue to be identified at this level, Equality and Diversity Working and Steering groups and the Member Development Steering Group.

Information and resources for staff can be found on the Loop under knowing our customers and communities.

## **Complaints**

The Council has in place a formal complaints procedure for dealing with complaints from members of the public. Embedded in the procedure, and stated clearly in our publicity leaflets, is a recognition that a valid complaint can occur if a member of the public feels that they have been treated differently by the Council or by one of its employees because of their race or other social grouping. The procedure has recently been enhanced to collect data about the ethnic origin; gender and disability of the complainant and monitoring arrangements are currently being set up.

## **Procurement and Contract Management**

The process of undertaking equality impact assessments is built into the procurement and contract management frameworks to ensure that the equality and diversity implications of contracted out services are fully

addressed and to ensure that our duty to consult, monitor and target set are met.

### **Consultation and Participation Scheme**

The Council works with a number of external organisations, which have a role in monitoring the Council's performance, and assist in developing services.

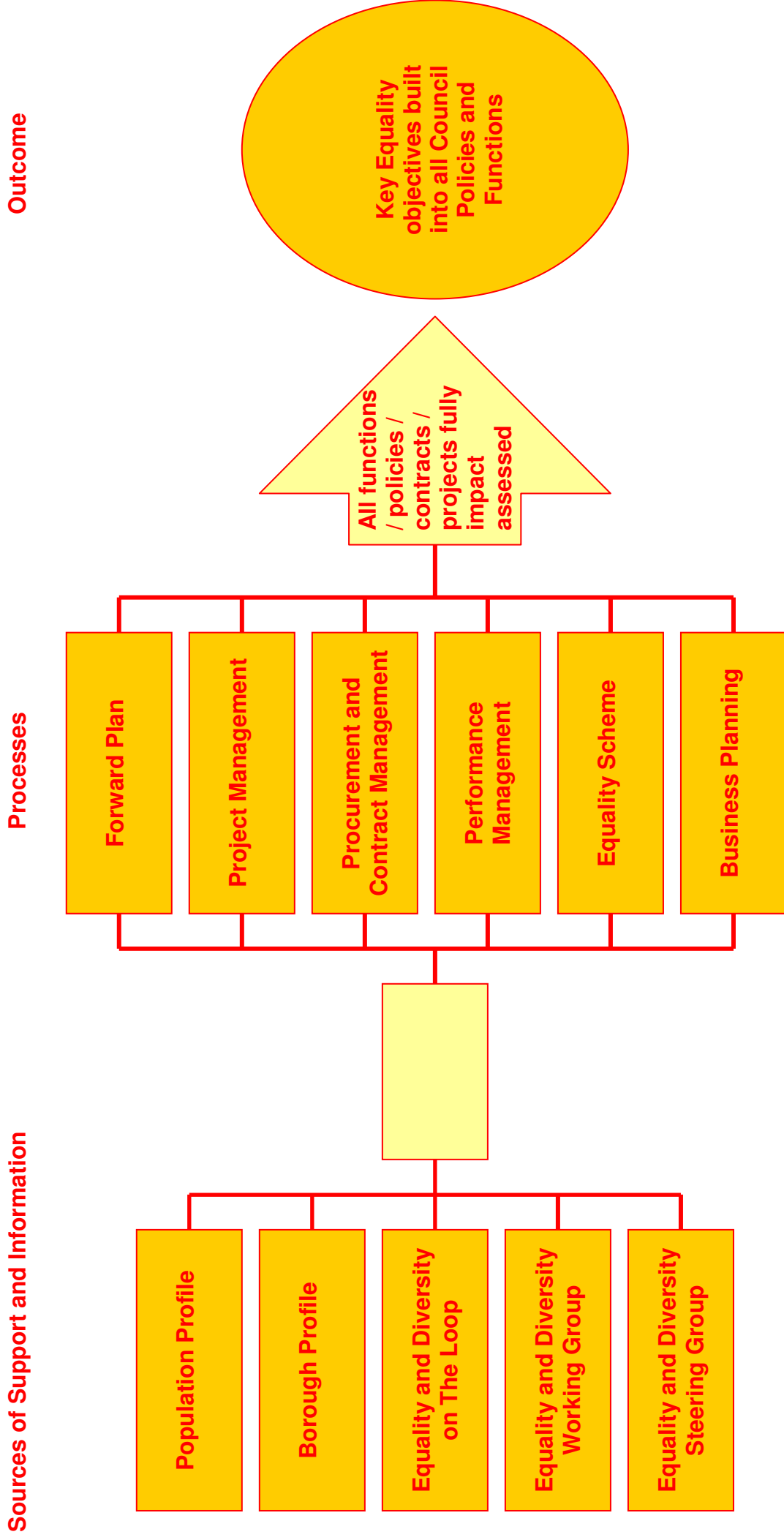
- Preston and West Lancashire Race Equality Council
- Chorley and South Ribble Disability Forum
- Chorley Disability Liaison group
- POUT
- Asian Women's Forum
- Chorley Interfaith Forum
- Age Concern
- Muslim Welfare Society
- Ethnic Minorities Consultative Committee

The Council also leads a Community Cohesion Diversity Incidents Monitoring Panel, which seeks to deliver integrated Multi Agency solutions to harassment and hate crime and to develop a proactive approach to addressing issues of Community Cohesion across the Borough.

### **Processes for embedding equality and diversity**

In order to ensure that Equality and Diversity Outcomes (equal access and opportunity for all) are embedded in all that we do as an organisation an equality element is built into many of the process and frameworks the Council operates. The diagram below sets out these processes and frameworks.

# Processes for Embedding Equality and Diversity



# Equality Impact Assessments

As a major employer in the Borough with responsibility for key public services, the Council must ensure that it is effectively delivering equality and promoting diversity within the policies and functions for which it has lead responsibility. In order to do this we will take the following steps:

Equality Impact Assessments are a systematic way of assessing the effects that a proposed policy, project or procurement is likely to have on different groups within the Borough.

The relevance review sets the timetable for carrying out EqIAs on existing functions and policies. All new policies will undergo an EqIAs as part of their development process.

**Step One:** The Council will assess each function/policy for its relevance to the general duty (high/medium/low), at least every three years in relation to race, disability, gender, age religion, sexuality and rurality

**Step Two:** The Council will establish the priority (high/medium/low) for the Council and its customers of each function/policy, in relation to race, disability, gender, age religion, sexuality and rurality

**Step Three:** Each function/policy will then be assessed, using the Council's Equality Impact Assessment Framework and Guidance, according to the following timetable:

- Any function/policy classed as being of High relevance and/or High priority in relation to race, disability, gender, age religion, sexuality and rurality will be reviewed by 31 May 2008.
- Any function/policy classed as being of Medium relevance and/or Medium priority in relation to race, disability, gender, age religion, sexuality and rurality will be reviewed by 31 May 2009.

In addition to the review of existing policies/functions described above, EqIAs are also carried out for any new policy/function or the amendment of an existing one, where the relevance has been classed as High or Medium with respect to race, disability, gender, age religion, sexuality and rurality

**Step Four:** If a policy/function would have an adverse impact on the promotion of equality we will take one of the following four options

- change the policy or activity by satisfying concerns raised by staff or stakeholders where possible
- consider ways in which we could reduce the adverse impact for any particular group



- find alternative ways of achieving the aims of the policy or a way of delivering the service that does not cause the same level of adverse impact
- justify the policy or activity proposed even when it could affect some community groups adversely, because of the policy's importance: for example to meet the specific needs of particular groups or when there is no other way of achieving the aims of the policy.

Wherever possible, the policy may be piloted, and its operation monitored, before it is put fully and formally into effect.

**Step Five:** The results of all Equality Impact Assessments will be considered and quality checked by the Diversity Working Group. The results of this Quality Assurance procedure will feed into any review of the Equality Impact Assessment and will inform the decision to be made as to whether to pursue to a full Equality Impact Assessment

**Step Six:** the results of an Equality Impact Assessment should be published.

## The Council as an Employer

All Human Resource based policies are reviewed and developed with due consideration to the implications to legislation and best practice related to race, gender and disability along with other equality and social inclusion issues.

### Monitoring Equality in Employment

The Council recognises its specific and general duties under the Acts, in relation to our arrangements for monitoring of employees and potential employees. It will build into its systems the facility to record and monitor the following (although some aspects of this are already being monitored):

- Monitor the ethnicity, gender and disability of employees broken down by grade;
- Monitor the ethnicity, gender and disability of employees applying for and achieving promotion;
- Monitor the ethnicity, gender and disability of employees applying for and receiving training;
- Monitor the ethnicity, gender and disability of job applicants.

Although it does not currently, the Council will also move towards equality monitoring and analysing data and information arising from:

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

The Council will collate and publish statistical information resulting from equality monitoring on an annual basis.

### Future Monitoring in Employment

An integral aspect of this Equality Scheme is to develop our systems to meet the specific duties under the Act and to encourage best practice in order to produce effective management information.

Future monitoring will include developing our systems procedures to widen race, gender and disability monitoring to those areas where it does not currently exist. In particular, the Council will include monitoring in relation to religion and sexual orientation.

## **Action Plans**

Ultimate responsibility for the achievement of the equality goals and objectives rests with the Council's Executive, which provides strategic direction on Equality issues. The Assistant Chief Executive (Director of Policy and Performance) is the senior officer charged with delivering Equality Objectives.

We will embed equality objectives in all that we deliver and the importance afforded to this activity is reflected in the inclusion of Improving Equality of Opportunity and Life chances in the Corporate Strategy the key strategic driver for the authority.

Responsibility for the delivering of services which meet the needs of all of our Customers and Communities and are inclusive lies with the Council's Directors, Service Managers and Staff and a framework for Corporate and service specific equality action is detailed below.

We will ensure that the actions listed below are delivered through inclusion in Directorate Business Plans and careful monitoring.

The relevance review below is framework for identifying those services, policies and functions which are a priority for us as a Council. A number of impact assessments have been undertaken using the pre-existing relevance review and where appropriate this will still be applicable to the services and functions set out under the new organisational structure. An initial attempt has been made to assess the relevance and priority afforded to each of these functions and policies but further consultation will be undertaken with members, officers and the community which will inform the final version of this document.

