

Draft Comprehensive Corporate Equality Plan

(incorporating Race, Disability and Gender)

2008-2011

APPENDIX 'C8'
AGENDA ITEM 8

Introduction

This Corporate Equality Plan provides a three year action plan detailing how the objectives laid out in the Council's Comprehensive Equality Policy will be achieved. The plan details the Council's response to its general and specific duties under various pieces of legislation listed in the Comprehensive Equalities Policy.

The policy updates the Council's commitment to equality in light of new legislation and the Equality Standard for Local Government. It lays out the Council's key objectives in relation to equality and the roles and responsibilities of different parts of the Council to achieve these objectives.

This plan incorporates and replaces the Council's previous Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes. The plan and policy provides a single framework for all equality groups to ensure that the Council's duties to produce race, disability and gender equality schemes are addressed in a combined strategic document.

Phone: 01279 655261
Textphone: 07734 334504
E-mail: enquiries@eastherts.gov.uk
Mail: The Council Offices, The Causeway,
Bishop's Stortford CM23 2EN

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The Corporate Equality Plan also includes our planned programme of Equality Impact Assessments over the next three years. The assessments will identify how our different services and policies impact on different parts of the community and will make recommendations to improve equality in service delivery and employment. The assessments will be published and consulted on. The programme was developed in light of our list of functions relevant to our equality duties. This list can be found in the Council's Generic Equality Scheme at our website www.eastherts.gov.uk.

Contacting the Council

We welcome feedback on this plan and our work on equality. If you have any comments about any part of the Council's work on equality please contact the Community Projects Team on:

Corporate Equality Plan 2008-2011

Objective	Action	Responsible Team / Officer	Target Date
Promoting Community Leadership And Community Cohesion			
1. Ensure that the sustainable community strategy responds to the needs of all local communities through ongoing consultation with key groups and the use of equality impact assessments.	Consult sustainable communities on the review of the Community Strategy. Conduct an equalities impact assessment on the revised sustainable Community Strategy.	Community Projects Team, Equalities Officers Group & Strategic Direction	Annual & Ongoing
2. The Council will ensure that the 3 year strategic plan clearly sets targets to measure progress towards national equality performance indicators.	Set targets in strategic plan.	Corporate Management Team and Strategic Direction	Annually end of April
3. The Council will develop a Comprehensive Corporate Equality Plan which will set out more detailed targets and actions for each department that will be delivered each year to implement this policy.	Produce Comprehensive Corporate Equality Plan	Corporate Management Team, Heads of Service,	Annual
	Consult on draft Equality Plan	Community Projects Team, Equalities Officers Group and Strategic Direction	Annual
4. The Council will aim to ensure that the adverse impact of crime within the community is addressed through the annual action plans that are developed by the Community Safety Partnership.	Develop annual action plan for Community Safety.	Community Safety Partnership	Annual

Objective	Action	Responsible Team / Officer	Target Date
Improving Consultation, Community Engagement And Communication			
5. Engage with users and designated community groups, staff and stakeholder groups on service delivery plan and priorities in order to increase the appropriateness and responsiveness of services to all sections of the community.	<p>Establish Council priorities through Residents' survey every 2 year</p> <p>Undertake Staff Survey every 2 years</p> <p>Develop and implement equalities impact assessment programme.</p> <p>Undertake Budget Consultation annually</p>	<p>Strategic Direction</p> <p>Strategic Direction</p> <p>Community Projects Team Equalities Officers Group & Strategic Direction</p> <p>Strategic Direction</p>	<p>2009/10</p> <p>One being done currently Annual and ongoing</p> <p>Autumn 2008</p>
6. Develop consultation mechanisms to increase the participation of minority communities, disadvantaged groups and those who are socially excluded	<p>Refresh Citizens Panel Membership meets equality criteria.</p> <p>Consult with minority community organisations on improving engagement.</p> <p>Maintain database of citizen panel</p>	<p>Strategic Direction</p> <p>Community Projects Team, Equalities Officers Group & Strategic Direction</p> <p>Strategic Direction</p>	<p>Review as appropriate</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
7. All public meetings to be held in venues accessible to people with disabilities ensuring compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act wherever possible	<p>Minimum access requirements for buildings produced as guidance for departments when using venues.</p> <p>Guidance adopted by all departments.</p>	<p>Strategic Direction, Equalities Officers' Group & Business Support</p> <p>All Services</p>	<p>By 2009</p> <p>As and when consultation undertaken</p>

Objective	Action	Responsible Team / Officer	Target Date
8. Monitor the impact of consultation mechanisms.	Review consultations undertaken as part of Equality Impact Assessments and development of Corporate Equality Plan.	Corporate Management Team, Equalities Officers Group and Strategic Direction	Ongoing
10. Publicise the Comprehensive Equality Policy and Comprehensive Corporate Equalities Plan	Publish Policy and Plan on website.	Community Projects Team supported by the Web Team	Yearly and as appropriate
11. Ensure that if needed information on key Council services can be made available in other languages and formats for non-English speakers and disabled people.	Refresh and revise corporate guidance on translation services and alternative formats.	Equalities Officer Group, Heads of Service	2009
12. Ensure that communication responds to differing levels of literacy and comprehension.	Work to principles of plain English campaign.	Strategic Direction & Equalities Officers Group	2008/9 and Ongoing
13. Ensure that the complaints procedure is accessible to all	Provide and advertise option of complaints forms in alternative languages and formats.	Corporate Management Team Head of Customer Services	2009

Objective	Action Planned	Responsible Team / Officer	Target Date
Promoting Equality In Service Delivery			
14. Undertake equality impact assessments of relevant functions, policies and proposed policies and publish the results.	Develop and implement equalities impact assessment programme.	Corporate Management Team, Heads of Service	2008
Objective	Action Planned	Responsible Team / Officer	Target Date
15. Ensure that all services produce a Service Equality Action Plan linked to their Service Plan ensuring all services are flexible and respond to the needs of different	Equality Action Plans to be integrated into all service plans and updated annually.	Heads of Service and Strategic Direction	Annual

groups within the community	Develop and implement equalities impact assessment programme. Review and develop monitoring mechanisms to ensure effective delivery and identify gaps		
16. Ensure that procurement procedures for commissioning and awarding of tenders are free from all institutional discrimination.	Review procurement procedures in line with national guidance.	Procurement Officer & CMT	2008 & Ongoing
17. Promote the social model of disability in the design and delivery of services in order to reduce the environmental and cultural barriers encountered by disabled people due to other people's attitudes towards them.	Promote social model within corporate guidance on disabled access.	Corporate Management Team & Equalities Officer Group	Ongoing
18. Act on the Comprehensive Equality Policy and harassment policy by challenging racist, sexist, homophobic and other discriminatory behaviour.	Work with the police to respond to hate crimes and take legal action where possible.	Community Safety Partnership	2009
19. Promote Customer Care	Undertake self assessment against the new Service Excellence	Corporate Management Team Head of Customer Services	2009
20. Keep under review and respond to customer complaints about harassment and domestic violence.	Receive and collate hate crime reports not related to Housing Services.	Community Safety Partnership / Co-ordinator.	Ongoing as appropriate
	Monitor homelessness applications on grounds of domestic violence.	Housing Options Manager	Ongoing as appropriate

Objective	Action Planned	Responsible Team / Officer	Target Date
Promoting Equality Of Opportunity In Employment And Training			
21. Recruit and treat applicants for jobs or promotion on objective criteria, having regard to relevant experience, potential, skills and abilities. No applicant or employee will be placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions which are not necessary to the job or which constitute direct or indirect discrimination.	Check all job descriptions and person specifications for vacant posts to ensure compliant with policy.	People & Organisational Services and Heads of Service	2009
22. Ensure that all employees understand their responsibility for implementing the Comprehensive Equality Policy and review this through the staff appraisal process.	Ensure equality policy addressed in induction courses. Ensure equality policy covered n employee handbook. Review appraisal guidance to address equality.	People & Organisational Services, Corporate Management Team	2009
23. Ensure that staff will be trained to carry out all duties in line with equalities legislation and the implementation of the Council's commitments in the Comprehensive Equality Policy	Deliver Corporate Training Programme Include in PDRs	People & Organisational Services People & Organisational Services & ALL	2009 & Ongoing
24. Provide a training plan which integrates diversity and equal opportunities. This plan will be consulted on with staff, managers and unions.	Review training needs in relation to equality and incorporate in Corporate Training Programme	People & Organisational Services & Equalities Officers Group, Heads of Service	2009 & Ongoing
25. Ensure that all employment policies and procedures are consistent with current legislation and all relevant Codes of Practice.	Undertake review of policy and procedure and recommend changes. Ensure policies are regularly updated to comply with changing legislation.	People & Organisational Services	2009
26. Ensure that proactive measures are put in place to identify and address areas of inequality in all areas of human resource management.	Develop monitoring and reporting systems for HR policies with regards to equality.	People & Organisational Services	2009 & Ongoing

Objective	Action Planned	Responsible Team / Officer	Target Date
27. Undertake workforce profiling by ethnic group, gender, disability, age, religion and sexual orientation, analyse implications of such profiling against community profiling, and publish the results.	Publish current data on ethnic group, gender, disability and age. Negotiate means for collecting data on religion and sexual orientation. Undertake pilot collection of religion and sexual orientation data.	People & Organisational Services	2009
27. Monitor by ethnic group, gender, disability, and age applicants for jobs, staff promotion and training, grievances, harassment, bullying, disciplinary action, performance appraisals, training and dismissals and report on findings.	Produce annual report to Equalities Officers Group and Corporate Management Team.	People & Organisational Services & Equalities Officers Group	Ongoing
28. Undertake exit interviews to monitor reasons for staff leaving or transferring post.	Identify any equalities themes to exit interviews.	People & Organisational Services & Equalities Officers Group	Ongoing
29. Provide clear employment policies and procedures which promote equal opportunities and family friendly employment practice.	Undertake review of policy and procedure and recommend changes	People & Organisational Services & Equalities Officers Group	2009
30. Monitor complaints from staff against harassment, victimisation and bullying and any other discriminatory behaviour	Provide annual report to Corporate Management Team & Members	People & Organisational Services	Yearly
31. Carry out a second Equal Pay Audit and Local Labour Market Review. Thereafter, monitor pay regularly in partnership with Unison.	Report produced detailing comparisons between employees of different genders in recruitment, training and retention, and shared with Unison.	People & Organisational Services	2009
32. Safeguard the individual rights of any employee who wishes to complain.	Monitor complaints of victimisation by staff.	People & Organisational Services	Ongoing

Objective	Action Planned	Responsible Team / Officer	Target Date
Evaluating The Success OF Our Equalities Commitments			
33. Develop self-assessment and audit procedures to establish performance against the Equality Standard for Local Government	Undertake self-assessment and audit against Equality Standards 1 and 2 and maintain audit data.	Corporate Management Team, Heads of Service & Equalities Officer Group	2009/10
34. Monitor the progress of the Corporate Equality Plan, revising targets annually and publishing the results.	Monitoring reports received for Corporate Management Team meetings quarterly.	Heads of Service Equalities Officer Task Group & Corporate Management Team	Quarterly
35. Report on progress against local Performance Indicators relating to equality	Quarterly reports and annual report produced for HR Committee	People & Organisational Services	Quarterly
36. Investigate the feasibility of establishing an employee group to be consulted on issues involving recruitment, training and retention (TBA)	Feasibility researched and a report produced for the HR committee.	People & Organisational Services	(TBA)
37. Train staff to undertake peer inspections of services using the impact assessment process;	Hold pilot sessions and revise guidance. Roll out impact assessment training and guidance to all relevant service managers.	Equalities Officer & Group People & Organisational Services	(TBA)
38. Promote the use of customer feedback, service delivery feedback, Citizens' Panel survey information and information gathered from user satisfaction surveys to provide further monitoring information and best practice	Provide guidance on sources of monitoring data and feedback.	Strategic Direction and Equalities Officer Group.	As appropriate
39. Promote the use of the Citizens' Panel to test satisfaction of council services against equality and diversity objectives.	Provide access to Citizens Panel for all departments undertaking consultation.	Strategic Direction & Community Projects Team	Ongoing
40. Review the Comprehensive Equality Policy every three years, or when new legislation requires it to be reassessed.	Undertake review	Corporate Management Team	

Equality Impact Assessment Programme 2008-2011

Department	Service / Policy For Assessment	Lead Officer	Target Completion Date
Strategic Direction	Communications	Lois Prior	2009/10
	Performance	Ceri Pettit	2009/10
	Consultation Strategy (following the review of the current strategy & toolkit)	Lorna Georgiou	2010
Health and Housing	East Herts Public Health Strategy	Tracy Strange	2009/10
	Housing Strategy	Claire Bennett	2010/11
	Housing Register and Allocations Policy	Claire Bennett	2009/10
	Homelessness & Homeless Prevention Strategy	Elizabeth Foy	2010/11 9/10
	Contaminated Land Strategy	Nick Egerton	2010/119/10
	Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy	Sheila Winterburn	2010/11
	Empty Homes Strategy	Sheila Winterburn	2010/11
	Affordable Warmth Strategy	Sheila Winterburn	2009/10/9
	Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy	Sheila Winterburn	2010/11
Environmental Health Enforcement Policy	Paul Thomas	20010/11/10	
Community and Cultural Services	Leisure Venues Contracts	Mark Kingsland	Done
	Leisure Development – Play	Mark Kingsland	Annual
	Leisure Development - Health	Mark Kingsland	Ongoing
	Grants	Claire Pullen	Ongoing
	Leisure Development – Arts	Lucy Shaw	Ongoing
	Leisure Development – Sports	Catherine Whitbourn	Ongoing
	Community Strategy	Mekhola Ray	April 2009
	Children’s Trust Partnership	Mekhola Ray	Annual
	Local Strategic Partnership	Will O’Neill	Annual
	Economic Development Strategy	Paul Pullin	Annual
Community Engagement Strategy	Mekhola Ray	2009/10	

Environmental Services	Environmental Crime Policy 2007 (Abandoned Vehicle, Graffiti, Flytipping/Flyposting), Waste & Recycling (Herts Municipal Waste Management Strategy) Parks & Open Spaces and Playgrounds Strategy 2007 -2012 Development Program (Parks and Open Space Strategy 2008-2012 Trade waste Clinical waste Public Convenience Pest Control Animal Control	Cliff Cardoza/Jean Petrie	(TBA)
Planning and Building Control	Statutory Planning Policy work including Local Development Framework Non Statutory Policy Work Planning Enforcement Building Control Conservation and Heritage Development Control (including pre and post decision actions) Stansted Airport Future Planning	Bryan Thomsett/Claire Sime Alison Young/Kevin Steptoe TBC Alison Young	(TBA)
Customer Services	Parking Strategy Customer Service Strategy	Andrew Pulham – Parking Manager Neil Sloper – Head of Customer Service	March 2010 March 2009
People and Organisational Services	Personnel – Recruitment & Selection Appraisal Learning & Development Reward – Equal Pay Policies Relocation of Staff – change the way we work	Jaleh Nahvi Helen Farrell Helen Farrell Jaleh Nahvi TBC	(TBA)

		Jaleh Nahvi	
Democratic and Legal Support	Democratic Services Legal	Jeff Hughes Jeff Hughes	(TBA)
Community Safety & Licensing	Licensing Enforcement Policy Enforcement Policy Statement of Gambling Principles (3 year policy – date of next publication is January 2010) Statement of Licensing Policy 2008 – 2011 (3 year policy – date of next publication is January 2011) Community Safety Plan 2008 – 2011 (3 year plan – date of next publication is April 2011)	Chris Clowes/ Jan Spong Paul Newman Paul Newman Lizzie Clarke	March 2010 subject to corp.data collection December 2009 Initial EIA undertaken March 2008 Initial EIA undertaken March 2008
Revenues and Benefit Services	Fraud Policy Overpayments Policy Appeals Benefits Council Tax Billing and Collection Discretionary Housing Payments Take up Strategy Baliff Code of Practice Corporate Debt Policy Fit and Proper Landlord Test Safeguard Policy	Su Tarran	March 2010 – subject to available information on which to do them

	Visiting Team		
Financial Services	Asset Management and Valuation Payroll Accountancy	Martin Shorsbree Gill Coleman Mandy Barton	(TBA)