

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES DELIVERING BETTER SERVICES FOR OUR CUSTOMERS

The Equalities Impact Assessment on The Corporate Equality Action Plan 2008-2011 undertaken by services across the council has highlighted gaps in service provision and areas for improvement. Officers and their Services have been working to address some of those areas. Below is a selection of good practice examples where the Council can demonstrate that equality outcomes have been achieved.

Waste Service

The waste collection function provides a variety of collection services to meet residents' needs, whilst reducing the amount of waste disposed of and increasing the level of waste reused/recycled or composted. Examples of their modified services are:

- Assisted collections to elderly customers are provided when required.
- assisted collections (exemptions) for residents with mobility/disability issues are provided
- all publicity material are offered in translated version, Braille and large print

Facilities Management

Facilities Management is a new service function and is responsible for the management & administration of the council offices. The examples of their modified service are:

- Provision of office equipment & furniture suitable for DDA requirements eg specially adapted chairs & desks, 'Evacu+chair', disabled lift, and sound system hearing loop is available in council chamber.
- Provides translation service and Braille contact.

Benefits Service

The Benefits Service administers the Housing and Council Tax benefits schemes on behalf of the secretary of state. The following examples have been developed to ensure access to services by its diverse communities:

- A home visiting service is provided to assist elderly, disabled and vulnerable claimants.
- For some Ethnic Minority claimants, English may not be their first language. They can access help via the language line facility in the following areas:
 - Where to get help and advice in the UK
 - Information about rights to live and work in the
 - Welfare benefits
 - Housing
 - Public services
 - Driving in the UK
- a welfare advice service is provided to those requiring assistance in their own homes.

Affordable Warmth Strategy

The aim of the Affordable Warmth Strategy is to improve access to affordable warmth for all private sector residents, particularly the vulnerable, in East Herts. Their modified services are:

- Translation services are available for some applicants whose first language is not English. Targeted home visits as well as written text are available as appropriate.
- It is possible that some female residents may not feel comfortable inviting a male surveyor or contractor into their home. Should this arise, reassurance as to CRB checking would be offered, and if necessary, alternative arrangements sought.
- Applicants with a disability and in receipt of a disability related benefit are a target group and will receive assistance. Home visits are offered, including through cross referral from the Home Improvement Agency, which targets this group.

These extracts have been taken from the Equalities Impact Assessments completed by Equalities Champions within their respective services and constitute only a small selection of the information currently available.