

Scrutiny Standing Panel Agenda



Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel Thursday, 27th March, 2008

Place: Committee Room 2, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping

Time: 7.00 pm

Democratic Services Officer: A Hendry- Democratic Services Officer
Tel: 01992 564246 Email: ahendry@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Members:

Councillors J M Whitehouse (Chairman), G Mohindra (Vice-Chairman), R Bassett, J Hart, M Colling, D Jacobs, R Morgan, Mrs P Richardson, Mrs P Smith and A Watts

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1. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

1. This meeting is to be webcast. Members are reminded of the need to activate their microphones before speaking.
2. The Chairman will read the following announcement:

"I would like to remind everyone present that this meeting will be broadcast live to the Internet and will be capable of repeated viewing and copies of the recording could be made available for those that request it.

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2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

(Assistant to the Chief Executive) To report the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

(Assistant to the Chief Executive). To declare interests in any items on the agenda.

In considering whether to declare a personal or a prejudicial interest under the Code of Conduct, Overview & Scrutiny members are asked pay particular attention to paragraph 11 of the Code in addition to the more familiar requirements.

This requires the declaration of a personal and prejudicial interest in any matter before an OS Committee which relates to a decision of or action by another Committee or Sub Committee of the Council, a Joint Committee or Joint Sub Committee in which the Council is involved and of which the Councillor is also a member.

Paragraph 11 does not refer to Cabinet decisions or attendance at an OS meeting purely for the purpose of answering questions or providing information on such a matter.

5. REPORTS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 5 - 12)

To consider and agree the notes of the meeting the Panel held on 11 February 2008.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE / WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 13 - 16)

(Chairman/Lead Officer) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has agreed the Terms of Reference of this Panel and associated Work Programme. This is attached. The Panel are asked at each meeting to review both documents.

7. REVIEW OF BEST VALUE AND LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (Pages 17 - 40)

(Deputy Chief Executive) to consider the attached report.

8. RACE EQUALITY SCHEME AND PROGRESS WITH EQUALITIES WORK (Pages 41 - 118)

(Deputy Chief Executive) to consider the attached report.

9. GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME AND DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME (Pages 119 - 124)

(Deputy Chief Executive) to consider the attached report.

10. REPORTS TO BE MADE TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

To consider which reports are ready to be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its next meeting.

11. FUTURE MEETINGS

To consider the forward programme of meeting dates for the new municipal year for this Panel.

17th June 2008;
19th August 2008;
11th November 2008;
13th January 2009;
10th February 2009 and
31st March 2009.

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EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
NOTES OF A MEETING OF FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY
PANEL
HELD ON MONDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2008
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING
AT 7.00 - 8.56 PM

Members Present: J M Whitehouse (Chairman), G Mohindra (Vice-Chairman), R Bassett, M Colling, D Jacobs, R Morgan, Mrs P Richardson and Mrs P Smith

Other members present: Mrs D Collins and C Whitbread

Apologies for Absence: J Hart

Officers Present D Macnab (Deputy Chief Executive), J Gilbert (Director of Environment and Street Scene), A Hall (Director of Housing), B Land (Assistant Head of Planning and Economic Development), P Maddock (Assistant Head of Finance), P Maginnis (Human Resources Manager), S Tautz (Performance Improvement Manager), Mrs J Twinn (Assistant Head of Finance), A Hendry (Democratic Services Officer) and G J Woodhall (Democratic Services Officer)

40. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Chairman made a short address to remind all present that the meeting would be broadcast on the Internet, and that the Council had adopted a protocol for the webcasting of its meetings. The Panel noted the Council's Protocol for Webcasting of Council and Other Meetings.

41. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

The Panel noted that there were no substitute members.

42. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were made.

43. NOTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING - 14 JANUARY 2008

The notes from the last meeting, held on 14 January 2008, were agreed.

44. TERMS OF REFERENCE / WORK PROGRAMME

The Panel noted the work programme and terms of reference. It was noted that the new Best Value Performance Plan would be produced in June 2008.

45. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2007/08 - QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The Panel considered the quarterly performance monitoring for Key Performance Indicators. A range of forty three Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2007/08 had been adopted by the Cabinet at its meeting in July 2007. The Panel noted that some

indicators would not be reported until the end of the year because little change was likely over each three month period.

The Panel went through the indicators concentrating on the ones that may not meet their target by the end of the year.

BV008 – Councillor Mrs Collins thought that there was a good chance that the Council would meet this objective and that officers were being too conservative in classing the outcome as being ‘uncertain’.

BV012 – it was noted there had been some improvement, managers are now receiving monthly reports on sickness absence and staff are recognising the importance of keeping their sickness levels in check.

BV066a – the Director of Housing noted that the Council was very close to achieving the target. Asked if people were getting into trouble now because of the sub prime issue with mortgages, the Director of Housing replied that it was safe to say that people were currently experiencing problems with debt and the Council had to follow its rent arrears protocol before they could take someone to court.

BV078a – it was noted that the Council has 9 BVPI’s in the benefits section at present that will go down 2 in April. They still have temporary staff in that section and there was a good chance they would not meet their targets this year because of the low staffing levels.

BV082a (i) – it was noted that this target would be met although the garden waste season does go on longer than it used to.

Councillor Mrs Smith asked if household compost went towards our total figures. The Director of Environment and Street Scene replied that it did not and this is a problem for all local authorities. There will be new Government targets coming in and we will be focusing on those targets.

BV084a – Councillor Jacobs remarked that it looked like we would not achieve that target. What steps can we take to meet this target, especially as when we collect grass cuttings, if they are wet, it would increase the weight of the collection. The Director of Environment and Street Scene said that there was no easy solution, but the Council did benefit from home composting as it reduced the weight given to us. Councillor Bassett commented that as we were so good at recycling, had this had any effect on flytipping? The Director replied that flytipping incidents had gone down over the last 12 months.

BV109a,b & c – the Assistant Head of Planning Services reported that ‘b’ and ‘c’ were headed in the right direction; 109a and b should hit their targets at the end of the year.

Councillor Morgan asked how much the figures would improve if the three week cycle for planning sub-committees was adopted. He was told that this had to be combined with the other actions to see a noticeable improvement. Councillor Mrs Smith commented that it was important to keep a full complement of staff and keep staff with relevant experience. Councillor Bassett said it was important that the Council continued to carry out enforcement actions rigorously.

BV170a & c – the Deputy Chief Executive explained that a lot of their targets’ were outside their control such as the reclassification of the Royal Gunpowder Mills. The Council used to be credited with a proportion of the visitors, but not any more. Also North Weald Airfield Museum had not had many hits on their website recently. This

year is the 50th Anniversary of the last Hurricane squadron leaving the airfield and there are a number of commemorative events planned, which should add more interest to their website and increase their hits. The top quartile will always stretch us, but there is scope for improvement next year.

BV199a – it was noted that there were issues causing difficulties with monitoring. The Council has been in conversation with DEFRA who have offered us 5-6 days of consultancy to help us with our monitoring. A fundamental revision was needed to get the baseline right. It was noted that the new contractor was improving our figures and will get our base level right next year.

Councillor Bassett asked why were the figures for last year were 2 or 3% and this year 28 and 33%. He was told that they were just measuring the figures wrongly, hence having DEFRA coming in to help us get our monitoring corrected. Councillor Bassett then asked if the state of the local rural roads counted against us. The Director of Environment and Street Scene replied that it did indeed count against us. We have made the point that this is not fair and we have now separated out our detritus from the litter, so it will not count against us for litter.

BV204 – it was noted that there was an unfortunate set of decisions in the last quarter with some unforeseen decisions that have gone against us. The Government is pushing the building of new houses but until Council policy changes we will keep on pursuing its policy of not cramming development into the built-up areas, even though it may lose on appeal.

BV212 – Councillor Mrs Collins asked if there was likely to be any improvements in DLO/Repairs. The Director of Housing said that they had been improving over the last two quarters. They would be looking at the works unit that will be coming into the Housing Directorate in May and have set up an officer working party on void properties. Choice Based Lettings in some cases lengthen the turnaround period for some properties. Highly sought after properties will increase our turnaround.

H15a – the Director of Housing commented that they knew the figures would be poor at this time with no main schemes in the offing. However there is good news, the Council was tracking all potential affordable housing schemes, where there are about 470 affordable homes in the pipeline; there are a further 240 possibles, but it would take some time for these to go through the system. Some of the big ones are Epping Forest College, St Margaret's' Hospital and the White Lodge Developments at Waltham Abbey.

The Chairman in summing up the item asked that as we are currently on track to meeting about 55% of the indicators target for 2007/08, and about 45% have fallen short; do we have any idea of how close we are to meeting our 75% performance target including the yearly ones. The Performance Improvement Manager replied that they were not sure at the moment as we have number of indicators that are only monitored at years end. This Panel will get the results of these indicators at the next meeting, when we will have a better idea.

RESOLVED:

That the Panel considered and commented upon the Council's performance for the first nine months of 2007/08, in relation to the Key Performance Indicators adopted by the Cabinet.

46. USE OF RESOURCES ASSESSMENT - AUDITOR JUDGEMENTS 2007

The Panel considered the report on the 'Use of Resources Assessment – Auditors Judgements 2007' and noted the Council's results. It was a 'good news' item, where we have improved from an adequate level 2 to a good level 3. It was noted that the Council had made good improvements (although it had gone down on one of its assessments), and officers should be congratulated on this improvement.

It was noted that this was no longer a draft report but the final version.

Councillor Jacobs queried the figure on page 60, item 2.3 – 'Council manages its assets base'. This had gone down from a 3 last year to a 2 this year. Officers were not clear why this had gone down. The officer's group will be focusing on this theme as something the Council would need to improve on. They will be producing an action plan to address weakness around this area. Page 65 showed the Audit Commission's views on how we can improve this.

The Chairman drew attention to page 69 and the findings on Value for Money. He wanted to know if officers could identify sections of unintended areas of high spending and intended areas of high spending. He was told that officers were looking at this in detail through the Use of Resources Working Party and focusing on all issues of Value for Money. They will identify them and any further work to be done on them.

RESOLVED:

That the Scrutiny Panel noted the Council's results in respect of the annual Use of Resources Assessment for 2007, including the key findings, conclusions and improvement opportunities identified by the Audit Commission.

47. BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN 2008/09 - SUMMARY VERSION

It was noted that the Council had been producing BVPPs since the late 1990's, but this will no longer be required by the Government. A summary version is published with the annual Council tax demand, while the full version has to be published by 30 June each year. Officers will circulate a copy of this to each member of the Panel in the new municipal year for their views and put it to Council for final agreement. It will also be circulated to the Cabinet for their views.

Councillor Bassett thought that the statement at the end of page 77 that "we have reviewed our parking policies and now provide free parking on Saturdays throughout the year" needs more of an explanation.

The Chairman commented on that if Cabinet members were accountable for meeting the targets and commitments, then they should have the opportunity to comment on the document and on the lack of statistics.

Councillor Mrs Collins said that it was urgent that this summary went out, but it needed updating as it looked old fashioned, there were lots of things that the Council had accomplished this year that was not in it, such as Choice Based Lettings. There is a need for an update. Officers will liaise with Mrs Collins to update the summary.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That subject to comments received from Cabinet members, the altered draft will be circulated again to members of this Scrutiny Panel and the Summary Best Value Performance Plan for 2008/09 be agreed; and
- (2) The Panel agreed the proposed arrangements for the consideration of the full version of the Best Value Performance Plan for 2008/09.

48. QUARTERLY FINANCIAL MONITORING

The Assistant Head of Finance introduced the Quarterly Financial Monitoring report for the third quarter of 2007/08.

The Panel noted that:

- The income budgets (pages 87 & 88 of the agenda) have improved slightly;
- That recycling credits (page 89) were performing particularly well;
- The revenue side of the HRA (page 92) was looking better than it had been;
- The capital shown on page 95 will have an underspend at year's end;
- There was an underspend on heating, this was because last year a rise in heating costs was anticipated for this year, but it may have been on the high side;
- The latest total project cost for the Springfield Improvement Scheme (page 100) would be reduced to £3,548 million instead of £4,124 million this was due to the overall cost being reduced slightly from 2% to -12%.

RESOLVED:

That the Panel noted the Revenue and Capital Financial monitoring report for the third quarter of 2007/08.

49. NATIONAL OUTCOME AND INDICATOR SET

The Performance Improvement Manager introduced the report on the new National Outcome and Indicator Set that is to be introduced from April 2008. This has been introduced by the Department for Communities and Local Government as a set of new national indicators to replace all other suites of performance indicators including Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs). Currently a review is being held of all existing BVPIs and Local Performance Indicators (LPIs)

The White Paper 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' outlined a new performance framework for local government, aimed at:

- reducing the burden on local authorities to collect performance information, by imposing fewer indicators centrally;
- local authorities setting their own priorities, determining performance measurement, and monitoring performance through partnership working, thereby focusing on and responding to local priorities; and
- devolving power to local authorities and their partners by making them accountable for all delivery of service to their citizens.

The new National Indicators are grouped into four themes:

- Stronger and Safer Communities;

- Children and Young People (the Council has no NIs under this theme);
- Adult Health and Wellbeing and Tackling Exclusion and Promoting Equality; and
- Local Economy and Environmental Sustainability.

The Panel noted that:

- the appendix attached to the report was the published national Indicator set. The ones greyed out were the ones that were thought to be applicable to this Council. The Panel went through this list and noted that the following two indicators, NI 14 and NI 179, were statutory;
- Some of the information to be collected may be the responsibility of other organisations;
- Service Directors have been asked to critically review existing BVPIs that are still important to the Council, such as waste management issues and come forward with a shorter list of old BVPIs and LPIs that may still have value. This will be reported to the Cabinet on 10 March and brought back to this Panel at their March meeting;
- Indicators will be more of a corporate nature;
- Members of the Panel were asked if that had any current indicators they would like to see continued.

Councillor Mrs Collins commented that the new indicators based on concepts and perceptions looked almost impossible to measure. The Performance Improvement Manager said that perception indicators would be measured by a survey. As from next year we will be required to do a two yearly survey. We have yet to receive the methodology on how they are to be conducted.

Councillor Mrs Richardson asked that as some survey will be undertaken by the LSP and not the Council, who would fund them? She was told that the Council was currently in discussion with the LSP on this. There may be economies of scale on conducting these surveys. About 35 would be shared with the County. Councillor Bassett asked if they were obligatory and was told that they were. It may be we would want to incorporate some of the BVPIs that we wish to keep, into these new surveys.

The Deputy Chief Executive suggested that as a starting point we should adopt the current KPIs as staff are familiar with these. Councillor Bassett asked would the auditors look at our KPIs as well and would it cause any problems if we did not use them. He was told that, yes it may cause a lot of problems.

The Panel then considered the current BVPIs and which ones should be carried forward into the regime. The following were chosen:

- **BVPI 175** - % of racial incidents reported to the Council that resulted in further action;
- **BVPI 66(a)** (to be amended) – Rent collected by the Council as a proportion of rents owed on HRA dwellings;
- **BVPI 184(a)** – the proportion of the Council's dwellings which were non-decent at the start of the financial year;
- **BVPI 212** – the average time (days) taken to re-let Council dwellings;
- **LPI H15(a)** – the number of affordable homes completed and ready for occupation during the year;
- **LPI H15(b)** – the amount of affordable housing required as part of section 106 agreements signed during the year for all large residential development sites,

expressed as a % of the total number of homes to be provided on large residential development sites;

- **BVPI 08** – the % of invoices for commercial goods and services that were paid by the Council within 30 days of receipt or within the agreed payment terms;
- **BVPI 09** – the % of Council Tax collected by the Council in the year;
- **BVPI 10** – the % of non-domestic rates collected by the Council in the year;
- **BVPI 12** – the number of working days/shifts lost to the Council due to sickness absences;
- **BVPI 82(a)(i)** – the % of household waste arising which have been sent by the Council for recycling;
- **BVPI 82(b)(i)** – the % of household waste sent by the Council for composting or treatment by anaerobic digestion;
- **BVPI 84** – the number of kilograms of household waste collected per head of the population of the district;
- **BVPI 91(a)** – the % of households resident in the district served by kerbside collection of recyclables;
- **BVPI 166** – the Council's performance against an environmental health service checklist;
- **BVPI 106** – the % of new homes built on previously developed land; and
- **BVPI 204** – the number of planning appeal decisions allowed against the Council's decision to refuse planning applications, as a % of the total number of planning appeals against refusal of planning applications.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the Panel noted the details of the new National Outcome and Indicator Set to be introduced from April 2008; and

(2) The Panel reviewed the current reassessment being undertaken into the continued monitoring of appropriate existing Best Value and Local Performance Indicators and made their own recommendations of BVPIs to be carried on (as indicated above).

50. REPORTS TO BE MADE TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

To report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that this Panel had considered in detail the new National Outcome and Indicator Set.

51. FUTURE MEETINGS

The Panel agreed that an extra meeting be added to their schedule and that this should be set for Thursday 27 March 2008.

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TERMS OF REFERENCE - STANDING PANEL

Title: Finance and Performance Management (incorporating work from the Customer Services and ICT Standing Panel)

Status: Standing Panel

Terms of Reference:

Performance Management

1. To review Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) and Local Performance Indicator (LPI) outturns for the previous year at the commencement of each municipal year, and to determine the following on an annual basis:
 - (a) The criteria for deciding which BVPIs and LPIs should be formally monitored by the Panel throughout the remainder of the year, based upon the 'traffic light' system of performance reporting, Comprehensive Performance Assessment improvements, and existing council and member priorities;
 - (b) A 'basket' of priority BVPIs and LPIs, performance against which will be reported to the Panel throughout the year;
 - (c) The monitoring frequency of those priority BVPIs and LPIs identified by the Panel;
 - (d) Arrangements for the wider member reporting and monitoring of performance against those BVPIs and LPIs that are not contained in the Panel's 'basket' of high priority indicators;
2. To consider proposals and make recommendations for corrective action in relation to poorly performing BVPIs and LPIs;

Best Value Performance Plan

3. To consider and make recommendations as appropriate on the format and content of the Council's annual Best Value Performance Plan;

Council Plan

4. To undertake a full review of the existing Council Plan and to make recommendations to the Cabinet on the overall strategic vision to be adopted, within the context of how the authority intends to prioritise resources and develop services in the medium term;

Public Consultation

5. To develop arrangements to directly engage the community in commenting on and shaping the future direction of services to make them more responsive to local needs, including the development of proposals for effective consultation through an

annual community conference;

6. To annually review the consultation exercises undertaken by the council over the previous year.

Finance

7. To consider the draft budgets for each portfolio and in so doing to evaluate and rank proposals for either enhancing or reducing services. Members will need to ensure consistency between wider policy objectives and financial demands.
8. To consider financial monitoring reports on key areas of income and expenditure for each portfolio.

Customer Services and ICT

9. The Panel to consider feedback from the Customers Services Working Group to ensure that the Panel is kept up to date on current customer service activities across all service areas.
10. To monitor and review progress on the implementation of all major ICT systems:
 - Review of the Web-Casting System.

Finance and Performance Management Standing Panel			
Item	Report Deadline/ Priority	Progress / Comments	Programme of future meetings
(1) Best Value Performance Plan 2007/08	Report considered annually - end February	Arrangements for consideration of Full BVPP for 2007/08 agreed on 12 February 2007. BVPP for 2008/09 to be considered in February 2008.	
(2) Key Performance Indicators - Quarterly Monitoring	Reports considered on a quarterly basis.	Underway First Quarter information considered at the 14 August 2007, 13 November '07 meeting and the February 08 meeting.	
(3) Quarterly Financial Monitoring	Reports to be considered on a quarterly basis.	Underway: First Quarter information was considered on 14 August '07, 13 November '07 meeting and the February 08 meeting.	
(4) Performance (Services to be scrutinised in Rotation)	Completed	Completed: Panel looked at the Council's land and accommodation strategy at the November meeting.	
(5) Local Area Agreement – Performance Monitoring	Reports considered on a six monthly basis	Performance monitoring commenced from start of 2007/08 municipal year. Next report due February 2008.	
(6) Council Plan 2006-2010 – Performance Monitoring	Report considered on an annual basis.	Publication of Council Plan completed . Performance monitoring commenced from start of 2007/08 municipal year. Next report due May/June 2008.	
(7) Annual Value for Money Analysis	Completed	Completed: Sub-Group set up to consider VFM Analysis for 2006/07. Sub-Group met on 8 March 2007 to consider the analysis and propose areas for possible Task and Finish Panels. The Sub-Group suggested the VFM on Planning Task and Finish Panel.	

(8) CPA Improvement Plan – Performance Monitoring	Reports considered on a six-monthly basis	Performance monitoring of outstanding CPA actions commenced from start of 2007/08 municipal year.	
(9) Annual Consultation Plan	Report considered on an annual basis.	Consultation Plan considered at first meeting of each municipal year. Next report due May/June 2008	
(10) Value for Money in Leisure Services	Completed	Completed at June 2007 meeting.	
(11) Detailed Portfolio Budgets	Completed	Completed - Annual review of the Portfolio holders budgets.	
(12) Medium Term Financial Strategy	To go to the January 2008 meeting.	To review the Council's medium term financial strategy.	

**Report to: Finance and
Performance Management
Scrutiny Panel**

Date of Meeting: 27 March 2008



Portfolio: Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services (Councillor C. Whitbread)

Subject: Review of Best Value and Local Performance Indicators

Officer contact for further information: S. Tautz (Ext 4180)

Democratic Services Officer: A. Hendry (Ext 4246)

Recommendations:

- (1) That proposals agreed by the Cabinet for the continued reporting and monitoring of appropriate existing Best Value and Local Performance Indicators, following the introduction of the new National Outcome and Indicator Set from April 2008, be noted; and
- (2) That the Scrutiny Panel note the concerns of the Corporate Executive Forum and Management Board in respect of the future collection and reporting of performance information in relation to National Indicator 14 (Avoidable Contact).

Report:

Background

1. (Deputy Chief Executive) At its meeting on 11 February 2007, the Scrutiny Panel received details of the new National Outcome and Indicator Set, and the national performance indicators (NIs) to be introduced from 1 April 2008. Members will recall that the NI set replaces all other existing suites of indicators including Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) and Local Performance Indicators (LPIs), and this report sets out the results of a review recently undertaken of all existing BVPIs and LPIs, with regard to the possible retention of some of these existing performance measures as local indicators from 2008/09 onwards.
2. Subsequent to the introduction of the National Outcome and Indicator Set, it was important for local authorities to continue to use LPIs to reflect performance against local priorities. The introduction of the new NI set has therefore provided an opportunity for a thorough review to be undertaken of the Council's current suite of statutory BVPIs and locally determined LPIs. All service directors have accordingly undertaken a review of the current BVPI and LPI sets, with a view to the possible adoption of some existing BVPIs as LPIs from 2008/09 onwards, where these continue to reflect local priorities but have not been brought forward into the new NI set in a broadly similar form.
3. At its last meeting Scrutiny Panel also undertook an initial review of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) adopted for 2007/08, in terms of whether these priority

indicators should also be carried forward into a new LPI suite. The results of these reviews of existing performance indicators and proposals for the adoption of a new suite of LPIs are set out at Appendix 1 for the consideration of the Scrutiny Panel, with proposed new LPIs highlighted in grey shading. The review has resulted in the proposed deletion of several existing indicators, and the transfer of others to relevant business plans. In addition, a range of asset management related LPIs have also recently been adopted as a result of recommendations made by the Audit Commission through the annual Use of Resources assessment. These proposals were considered and agreed by the Cabinet at its meeting on 10 March 2008.

The National Indicator Set

4. The new NI Set has recently been reviewed by the Corporate Executive Forum and Management Board, who have expressed specific concern in relation to NI 14 (Avoidable Contact). This new indicator seeks to measure the average number of customer contacts (telephone, email or in-person) for each resolved request, in order to manage failure demand resulting from customer contact that would be unnecessary if public authorities could:
 - get things right first time;
 - join-up parts of the public sector for the customer so that they do not need to make multiple contacts;
 - manage signposting and referral both within and across agencies; and,
 - set clear expectations at the outset so that the customer knows what to expect.
5. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) envisages that the primary way of collecting data for this indicator will be through the use of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, that allocates single unique client reference numbers to service requests so that they, and the number of contacts individuals have with the authority, can be recorded. DCLG has indicated that, where local authorities have not invested in a CRM system, they will need to use a snapshot survey approach to review a random sample of service requests over a defined and agreed period. The Corporate Executive Forum and Management Board have expressed concern that local authorities such as the Council that do not currently have a CRM system will find the collection of data to report on this NI extremely difficult. It is additionally considered that, even with a CRM system, there would be problems in defining repeated versus different requests for the same customer. The periodic or annual survey approach suggested by DCLG is also considered to be fraught with difficulties, such as when would be the right time to conduct a survey to avoid it being unrepresentative due to seasonal factors.
6. As a result of concerns expressed by local authorities, the implementation of NI 14 has been deferred until October 2008. Further guidance on the indicator is to be issued by DCLG before the end of June 2008, and will also set out any refinements to the definition of the indicator (such as the wording of the services covered) in the light of lessons learned through piloting of the indicator over the next six months. A further report on these issues will be made to the Scrutiny Panel at such time as further guidance is available in relation to NI 14.

Reason for Decision

7. To enable members to contribute to the review of the current BVPI and LPI sets, with a view to the possible adoption of some existing BVPIs and LPIs as local performance measures from 2008/09 onwards.

Options Considered and Rejected

8. None. The Council is encouraged to utilise LPIs as a process to monitor performance

against the achievement of local priorities and targets. Appropriate data collection systems and monitoring and reporting arrangements are already in place for each of the existing BVPIs and LPIs proposed to be adopted as local performance measures from 2008/09 onwards.

Consultation Undertaken

9. All directors have contributed to the review of the current BVPI and LPI sets. The new National Outcome and Indicator Set has been reviewed by the Corporate Executive Forum, Management Board, the Scrutiny Panel and the Cabinet. The Cabinet considered proposals for the continued reporting and monitoring of appropriate existing BVPIs and LPIs set out in this report, at its meeting on 10 March 2008. The Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder has been consulted in relation to the content and recommendations of this report.

Resource implications:

Budget/Personnel Provision: The collation and reporting of performance information arising from the new NI set and a new suite of LPIs will be met from within the existing Performance Management Unit budget. The introduction of a Customer Relationship Management system in order to most accurately comply with the requirements of NI 14 (Avoidable Contact) will require the identification of significant additional resources.

Land: Nil

Council Plan/Best Value Performance Plan Reference: Council Plan Section 8 – ‘How We Measure Our Achievements’.

Relevant Statutory Powers: ‘Strong and Prosperous Communities’ White Paper (2007)

Background Papers: None

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: Nil

Key Decision Reference (if required): None

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REVIEW OF BEST VALUE/LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Community Wellbeing Portfolio						
PI (& KPI) REF & RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR	SUMMARY DEFINITION	NI REF	BVPI/LPI RECOMMENDATION			JUSTIFICATION OF RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR FOR RECOMMENDATION (RETENTION, DELETION, TRANSFER OF INDICATOR)
			RETAIN AS LPI	DELETE	TRANSFER TO BUSINESS PLAN	
BV2a	The level of the Equality Standard for Local Government	None	Yes	No	No	The Equality Standard is the best measure of the Council's progress on equality issues. Equality and diversity will continue to be important areas against which the authority's performance is assessed.
Derek Macnab						
KPI BV2b	The quality of the Race Equality Scheme	None	No	Yes	No	The Council's progress on equality and diversity issues can be adequately measured by the retention of BV2a as an LPI.
Derek Macnab						
BV126	Domestic burglaries per 1,000 households	None	No	Yes	No	Each Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership is required to produce an Annual Strategic Assessment (ASA) to identify issues affecting public safety. This indicator will be included within the Council's ASA and does not therefore need to be monitored separately.
John Gilbert						
BV127a	Violent crimes per 1,000 population	NI 15	N/A	N/A	N/A	No action required. Indicator carried forward into new National Indicator Set in broadly similar form.
John Gilbert						
BV127b	Robberies per 1,000 population	None	No	Yes	No	Each Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership is required to produce an Annual Strategic Assessment (ASA) to identify issues affecting public safety. This indicator will be included within the Council's ASA and does not therefore need to be monitored separately.
John Gilbert						

BV128	Vehicle crimes per 1,000 population	None	No	Yes	No	Each Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership is required to produce an Annual Strategic Assessment (ASA) to identify issues affecting public safety. This indicator will be included within the Council's ASA and does not therefore need to be monitored separately.
John Gilbert						
KPI LPI EH6	Licence applications processed within statutory periods	None	Yes	No	No	This indicator encourages the prompt determination of a range of licence applications. The retention of this indicator as an LPI will measure the Council's performance in this area.
Colleen O'Boyle						

Housing Portfolio

PI (& KPI) REF & RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR	SUMMARY DEFINITION	NI REF	BVPI/LPI RECOMMENDATION			JUSTIFICATION OF RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR FOR RECOMMENDATION (RETENTION, DELETION, TRANSFER OF INDICATOR)
			RETAIN AS LPI	DELETE	TRANSFER TO BUSINESS PLAN	
KPI BV63	The average SAP rating of the Council's dwellings	None	No	No	Yes	The ability to increase the average SAP rating is now very low, since most affordable measures have been taken. There is therefore little movement in this indicator and little to monitor, although as this data has to be provided to Government through the annual HIP Return, it will continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
Alan Hall						
BV64	Private vacant dwellings returned to occupation or demolished as a result of action by the Council	None	No	No	Yes	Although the Council has little real control over the number of vacant (non-Council) properties that are returned to use, statistics are kept and this information will continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
Alan Hall						
KPI BV66a	Rent collected as a proportion of rents owed on housing revenue account dwellings	None	Yes	No	No	This indicator relates to an important housing function (the collection of rent) and should continue to be monitored as an LPI.
Alan Hall						
BV66b	Tenants with more than seven weeks gross rent arrears as a percentage of total tenants	None	No	Yes	No	This indicator provides very little value, and there is no material importance to seven weeks.
Alan Hall						

BV66c	Percentage of tenants in arrears who have been served a Notice Seeking Possession	None	No	Yes	No	This indicator provides very little value. High numbers are perceived by the indicator to be poor, yet may be required to reduce rent arrears and meet BV66a.
Alan Hall						
BV66d	Percentage of tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears	None	No	Yes	No	This indicator provides very little value. High numbers are perceived by the indicator to be poor, yet may be required to reduce rent arrears and meet KPI BV66a.
Alan Hall						
KPI BV183b	Average length of stay (weeks) in hostel accommodation of households that are unintentionally homeless and in priority need	None	No	No	Yes	With the introduction of choice based lettings and the fixed number of rooms at Norway House, performance is to a large degree outside of the Council's control. However, the information is useful and will continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
Alan Hall						
KPI BV184a	Proportion of Council dwellings which were non-decent at the start of the year	NI 158	N/A	N/A	N/A	No action required. Indicator carried forward into new National Indicator Set in broadly similar form.
Alan Hall						
KPI BV184b	Percentage change in the proportion of non-decent Council dwellings between the start and end of the year	None	No	Yes	No	The percentage change is not particularly important, especially since the Council has a low level of non-decent homes and is on target to meet the Government's target of zero by 2010. The more important indicator is the actual % non decent homes, which is part of the NI Set referred to above.
Alan Hall						
BV202	Rough sleepers	None	No	Yes	No	There is very little rough sleeping within the district and, when it occurs, it is difficult to be aware of and record it. The Council has always returned the minimum value of <10 for this indicator.
Alan Hall						
KPI BV212	Average number of days to re-let Council dwellings	None	No	No	Yes	The average re-let time is affected by many factors, not least difficult to let properties. However, this information is useful and will continue to be monitored through the annual business plan.
Alan Hall						
BV213	Homeless situations resolved by Housing Advice Services	None	No	Yes	No	Although to be deleted as an indicator, this information will still be collected, since the Council has been advised that this information will be required to be provided to the Government on the quarterly homelessness return.
Alan Hall						

LPI H1a	Former Tenant Arrears collected	None	No	No	Yes	This is not considered to be sufficiently key to be retained as a local indicator. However, the information is useful and will continue to be monitored through the annual business plan.
Alan Hall						
LPI H1b	Current rent arrears as proportion of rent roll	None	Yes	No	No	There is some debate about the importance of this, bearing in mind the retention of KPI BV66a as an LPI, which is similar. However, on balance it is felt that this is sufficiently key to retain as an LPI.
Alan Hall						
LPI H2a	Emergency repairs undertaken within target time	None	Yes	No	No	In view of the importance of repairs to tenants and changes proposed for the Works Unit, it is proposed that this indicator should be retained as an LPI.
Alan Hall						
LPI H2b	Urgent repairs undertaken within target time	None	Yes	No	No	In view of the importance of repairs to tenants, the relatively poor current performance and changes proposed for the Works Unit, it is proposed that this indicator should be retained as an LPI.
Alan Hall						
LPI H2c	Routine repairs undertaken within target time	None	Yes	No	No	In view of the importance of repairs to tenants, the relatively poor current performance and changes proposed for the Works Unit, it is proposed that this indicator should be retained as an LPI.
Alan Hall						
LPI H3	Satisfaction with repairs	None	Yes	No	No	In view of the importance of repairs to tenants, it is proposed that this indicator should be retained as an LPI.
Alan Hall						
LPI H10a	Average number of single homeless households placed in bed and breakfast accommodation	None	Yes	No	No	In view of the importance placed by the Council on reducing the reliance and cost of bed and breakfast accommodation, it is proposed that this indicator should be retained as an LPI.
Alan Hall						
LPI H10b	Average number of homeless households placed in hostel accommodation	None	No	Yes	No	This indicator has little to do with performance, and is dependent on the number of households presenting as homeless and the availability of rooms at the Hostel.
Alan Hall						
LPI H10c	Average number of homeless households placed in other temporary accommodation	Nil 156	N/A	N/A	N/A	No action required. Indicator carried forward into new National Indicator Set in broadly similar form.
Alan Hall						

KPI H15a	The number of affordable homes completed and ready for occupation during the year	NI 155	N/A	N/A	N/A	No action required. Indicator carried forward into new National Indicator Set in broadly similar form.
Alan Hall						
KPI H15b	The amount of affordable housing required as part of Section 106 Agreements signed during the year	None	No	No	Yes	The Council has a policy on the amount of affordable housing required (> 40%). On rare occasions when < 40% is achieved, this is agreed by the relevant Area Plans Sub-Committee. Moreover, occasional developments in excess of 40% (e.g. 80% agreed at White Lodge) skew the figures to make the average somewhat meaningless. This indicator will continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
Alan Hall						
LPI EH2	Response to service requests (Care and Repair)	None	No	No	Yes	This is not considered to be sufficiently key to be retained as a local indicator, but the information is useful will continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
Alan Hall						

Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services Portfolio

PI (& KPI) REF & RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR	SUMMARY DEFINITION	NI REF	BVPI/LPI RECOMMENDATION			JUSTIFICATION OF RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR FOR RECOMMENDATION (RETENTION, DELETION, TRANSFER OF INDICATOR)
			RETAIN AS LPI	DELETE	TRANSFER TO BUSINESS PLAN	
KPI BV8	Percentage of invoices paid within 30 days of receipt	None	Yes	No	No	This indicator encourages the prompt payment of invoices and supports the Council's best practice procurement arrangements. The retention of this indicator as an LPI will measure the Council's performance in this area.
Bob Palmer						
KPI BV9	Percentage of Council Tax collected	None	Yes	No	No	This indicator measures the collection of Council Tax and is therefore an important issue. The retention of this indicator as an LPI will measure the Council's performance in this area.
Bob Palmer						
KPI BV10	Percentage of non-domestic rates collected	None	Yes	No	No	This indicator measures the collection of National Non-Domestic Rates and is therefore an important issue. The retention of this indicator as an LPI will measure the Council's performance in this area.
Bob Palmer						
KPI BV11a	Percentage of top-paid 5% of staff who are women	None	Yes	No	No	The Council has a responsibility to ensure equal opportunities for women, individuals from ethnic minorities and those with disabilities, in recruitment and promotion to senior positions. The retention of this indicator as an LPI will provide a snapshot of the Council's workforce in order to measure performance in this area.
Colleen O'Boyle						

KPI BV11b	Percentage of top 5% of staff from an ethnic minority	None	Yes	No	No	The Council has a responsibility to ensure equal opportunities for women, individuals from ethnic minorities and those with disabilities, in recruitment and promotion to senior positions. The retention of this indicator as an LPI will provide a snapshot of the Council's workforce in order to measure performance in this area.
Colleen O'Boyle						
KPI BV11c	Percentage of top 5% of staff who have a disability.	None	Yes	No	No	The Council has a responsibility to ensure equal opportunities for women, individuals from ethnic minorities and those with disabilities, in recruitment and promotion to senior positions. The retention of this indicator as an LPI will provide a snapshot of the Council's workforce in order to measure performance in this area.
Colleen O'Boyle						
KPI BV12	Number of working days lost due to sickness absence	None	Yes	No	No	This is an important indicator and members have previously agreed a range of actions to reduce sickness absence.
Colleen O'Boyle						
KPI BV14	Percentage of employees retiring early (excluding ill-health) as a percentage of the Council's workforce	None	Yes	No	No	Early retirements usually have a cost impact for the Council and it would be prudent to continue to collect and monitor data against this indicator through its retention as an LPI.
Colleen O'Boyle						
KPI BV15	Percentage of employees retiring on grounds of ill-health, as a percentage of the Council's workforce	None	Yes	No	No	Early retirements usually have a cost impact for the Council and it would be prudent to continue to collect and monitor data against this indicator through its retention as an LPI.
Colleen O'Boyle						
KPI BV16a	Percentage of the Council's employees with a disability	None	Yes	No	No	The Council has a responsibility to ensure equal opportunities in the employment of women, individuals from ethnic minorities and those with disabilities. The retention of this indicator as an LPI will provide a snapshot of the Council's workforce in order to measure performance in this area. Additional elements will also be developed for this indicator, to measure the percentage of the authority's staff that are female or who have a disability (in line with BV1 a, b and c).
Colleen O'Boyle						

KPI BV17a	Percentage of the Council's employees from ethnic minority communities	None	Yes	No	No	The Council has a responsibility to ensure equal opportunities for women, individuals from ethnic minorities and those with disabilities, in recruitment and promotion to senior positions. The retention of this indicator as an LPI will provide a snapshot of the Council's workforce in order to measure the Council's performance in this area. An additional element will also be developed for this indicator, to measure the percentage of the Council's staff that are female (in line with BV11a, b, c)
Colleen O'Boyle						
BV76b	Benefit fraud investigators employed per 1,000 caseload	None	No	Yes	No	This indicator is not considered to be sufficiently key to be retained as an LPI, or to continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
Bob Palmer						
BV76c	Benefit fraud investigations employed per 1,000 caseload	None	No	Yes	No	This indicator is not considered to be sufficiently key to be retained as an LPI, or to continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
Bob Palmer						
BV76d	Benefit fraud prosecutions per 1,000 caseload	None	No	Yes	No	This indicator is not considered to be sufficiently key to be retained as an LPI, or to continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
Bob Palmer						
KPI BV78a	Average time (days) for processing new benefit claims	NI 181	Yes	No	No	Although this indicator has been carried forward into the new National Indicator Set in a broadly similar form, new NI 181 combines the issues previously measured by this indicator and BV78b. It is considered that the information currently provided by BV78a is useful, and that this indicator should therefore be retained as an LPI.
Bob Palmer						
KPI BV78b	Average time (days) for processing notification of changes of circumstance for benefit claims	NI 181	Yes	No	No	Although this indicator has been carried forward into the new National Indicator Set in a broadly similar form, new NI 181 combines the issues previously measured by this indicator and BV78a. It is considered that the information currently provided by BV78b is useful, and that this indicator should therefore be retained as an LPI.
Bob Palmer						

KPI BV79a	Accuracy of processing benefit claims	None	No	Yes	No	This indicator is not considered to be sufficiently key to be retained as an LPI , or to continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
Bob Palmer						
BV79b(i)	Percentage of recoverable benefit overpayments recovered	None	No	Yes	No	This indicator is not considered to be sufficiently key to be retained as an LPI , or to continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
Bob Palmer						
BV79b(ii)	Benefit overpayments recovered, as percentage of overpayment debt	None	No	Yes	No	This indicator is not considered to be sufficiently key to be retained as an LPI , or for it to continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
Bob Palmer						
BV79b(iii)	Benefit overpayments written-off, as percentage of overpayment debt	None	No	Yes	No	This indicator is not considered to be sufficiently key to be retained as an LPI , or for it to continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
Bob Palmer						
LPI SS4a	Percentage of audit projects completed	None	Yes	No	No	This indicator provides a useful means of monitoring audit performance and evidence to support the annual review of the effectiveness of the system of Internal Audit, and should be retained as an LPI.
Joe Akerman						
LPI SS4b	Productive audit time	None	Yes	No	No	This indicator provides a useful means of monitoring audit performance and evidence to support the annual review of the effectiveness of the system of Internal Audit, and should be retained as an LPI.
Joe Akerman						
LPI SS4c	Internal Audit customer satisfaction	None	Yes	No	No	This indicator provides a useful means of monitoring audit performance and evidence to support the annual review of the effectiveness of the system of Internal Audit, and should be retained as an LPI.
Joe Akerman						
LPI SS4f	Average cost per productive audit day	None	Yes	No	No	This indicator provides a useful means of monitoring audit performance and evidence to support the annual review of the effectiveness of the system of Internal Audit, and should be retained as an LPI.
Joe Akerman						
LPI F13	Percentage of revenues calls answered within ten seconds	None	No	Yes	No	This indicator is not considered to be sufficiently key to be retained as an LPI , or for it to continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
Bob Palmer						

LPI LA1	The percentage of letters seeking ownership details in relation to Section 106 Agreements sent within seven working days of full instructions being given to the Director of Corporate Support Services	None	No	No	Yes	This is not considered to be sufficiently key to be retained as an LPI, as it measures day to day statutory work. However, the information is useful and this indicator will be revised and will continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
Colleen O'Boyle						
LPI LA2	The percentage of first draft Section 106 Agreements sent out within seven working days of the receipt of the information required by LPI LA1 by the Director of Corporate Support Services	None	No	No	Yes	This is not considered to be sufficiently key to be retained as an LPI, as it measures day to day statutory work. However, the information is useful and this indicator will be revised and will continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
Colleen O'Boyle						
LPI PR3	The number of visits to the Council's website per month	None	Yes	No	No	This indicator provides a useful means of monitoring the use of the Council's website and should be retained as an LPI.
Derek Macnab						
LPI AM 1	Property condition (condition category and backlog maintenance)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	New asset management LPI adopted by the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel as a result of recommendations made by the Audit Commission through the Use of Resources assessment for 2006/07.
Colleen O'Boyle						
LPI AM 2	Internal rate of return from non-operational portfolio	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	New asset management LPI adopted by the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel as a result of recommendations made by the Audit Commission through the Use of Resources assessment for 2006/07.
Colleen O'Boyle						
LPI AM 3	Annual management costs (operational and non-operational properties)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	New asset management LPI adopted by the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel as a result of recommendations made by the Audit Commission through the Use of Resources assessment for 2006/07.
Colleen O'Boyle						
LPI AM 4	Running costs and carbon dioxide emissions	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	New asset management LPI adopted by the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel as a result of recommendations made by the Audit Commission through the Use of Resources assessment for 2006/07.
Colleen O'Boyle						
LPI AM 5	Cost and time predictability of capital projects	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	New asset management LPI adopted by the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel as a result of recommendations made by the Audit Commission through the Use of Resources assessment for 2006/07.
Colleen O'Boyle						
LPI AM 6	Rent arrears as a percentage of rental income	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	New asset management LPI adopted by the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel as a result of recommendations made by the Audit Commission through the Use of Resources assessment for 2006/07.
Colleen O'Boyle						

LPI AM 7	The occupation rate of commercial and industrial property	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	New asset management LPI adopted by the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel as a result of recommendations made by the Audit Commission through the Use of Resources assessment for 2006/07.
Colleen O'Boyle							
LPI AM 8	Rental value as a percentage yield of the commercial and industrial portfolio asset value	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	New asset management LPI adopted by the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel as a result of recommendations made by the Audit Commission through the Use of Resources assessment for 2006/07.
Colleen O'Boyle							

Environmental Protection Portfolio

PI (& KPI) REF & RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR	SUMMARY DEFINITION	NI REF	BVPI/LPI RECOMMENDATION			JUSTIFICATION OF RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR FOR RECOMMENDATION (RETENTION, DELETION, TRANSFER OF INDICATOR)
			RETAIN AS LPI	DELETE	TRANSFER TO BUSINESS PLAN	
KPI BV82a(i)	Percentage of household waste sent for recycling	NI 192	N/A	N/A	N/A	No action required. Indicator carried forward into new National Indicator Set in broadly similar form.
John Gilbert						
KPI BV82a(ii)	Tonnage of household waste sent for recycling	NI 192	N/A	N/A	N/A	No action required. Indicator carried forward into new National Indicator Set in broadly similar form.
John Gilbert						
KPI BV82b(i)	Percentage of household waste sent for composting or anaerobic digestion	NI 192	N/A	N/A	N/A	No action required. Indicator carried forward into new National Indicator Set in broadly similar form.
John Gilbert						

KPI BV82b(ii)	Tonnage of household waste sent for composting or anaerobic digestion	NI 192	N/A	N/A	N/A	No action required. Indicator carried forward into new National Indicator Set in broadly similar form.
John Gilbert						
KPI BV84a	Kilograms of household waste collected per head	NI 191	N/A	N/A	N/A	No action required. Indicator carried forward into new National Indicator Set in broadly similar form.
John Gilbert						
BV84b	Percentage change in kilograms of household waste collected per head	NI 191	N/A	N/A	N/A	No action required. Indicator carried forward into new National Indicator Set in broadly similar form.
John Gilbert						
BV86	Cost of waste collection per household	None	No	Yes	Yes	The information provided by this indicator will be reported to the Waste Partnership Board, and will be monitored by way of key performance indicators contained in the waste management contract and through the relevant annual business plan.
John Gilbert						
KPI BV91a	Percentage of households served by kerbside collection of recyclables	None	No	No	Yes	The information provided by this indicator will be reported to the Waste Partnership Board, and will be monitored by way of key performance indicators contained in the waste management contract and through the relevant annual business plan.
John Gilbert						
BV91b	Percentage of households served by kerbside collection of at least two recyclables	None	No	No	Yes	The information provided by this indicator will be reported to the Waste Partnership Board, and will be monitored by way of key performance indicators contained in the waste management contract and through the relevant annual business plan.
John Gilbert						
KPI BV166a	Performance against environmental health best practice check list	None	No	No	Yes	This is not considered to be sufficiently key to be retained as an LPI. However, the information is useful and this indicator will continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
John Gilbert						
KPI BV199a	Proportion of land and highway with unacceptable deposits of litter and detritus	NI 195	N/A	N/A	N/A	No action required. Indicator carried forward into new National Indicator Set in broadly similar form.
John Gilbert						

KPI BV199b	Proportion of land and highway with unacceptable levels of graffiti	NI 195	N/A	N/A	N/A	No action required. Indicator carried forward into new National Indicator Set in broadly similar form.
John Gilbert						
KPI BV199c	Proportion of land and highway with unacceptable levels of fly-posting	NI 195	N/A	N/A	N/A	No action required. Indicator carried forward into new National Indicator Set in broadly similar form.
John Gilbert						
KPI BV199d	Reduction in number of incidents and increase of enforcement actions taken to deal with fly-tipping	NI 196	N/A	N/A	N/A	No action required. Indicator carried forward into new National Indicator Set in broadly similar form.
John Gilbert						
BV216a	Number of sites of potential concern with respect to contaminated land	None	No	Yes	Yes	Processes for the assessment of sites of potential concern with respect to contaminated land are under fundamental review. The information provided by this indicator is useful and will continue to be monitored through the annual business plan.
John Gilbert						
BV216b	Percentage of sites of potential concern for which information is available to enable remediation to be considered	None	No	No	Yes	Processes for the assessment of sites of potential concern with respect to contaminated land are under fundamental review. The information provided by this indicator is useful and will continue to be monitored through the annual business plan.
John Gilbert						
BV217	Percentage of pollution control improvements completed	None	No	No	Yes	This is not considered to be sufficiently key to be retained as an LPI, as it measures day to day statutory work. However, the information is useful and this indicator will continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
John Gilbert						
BV218a	Abandoned vehicle reports investigated within 24 hours	None	No	No	Yes	This is not considered to be sufficiently key to be retained as an LPI, as it measures day to day statutory work. However, the information is useful and this indicator will continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
John Gilbert						
BV218b	Percentage of abandoned vehicles removed within 24 hours of entitlement to remove	None	No	No	Yes	This is not considered to be sufficiently key to be retained as an LPI, as it measures day to day statutory work. However, the information is useful and this indicator will continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
John Gilbert						

LPI EH1		Response to service requests (Environmental Protection)	None	No	Yes	Yes	This is not considered to be sufficiently key to be retained as an LPI, as it measures day to day statutory work. However, the information is useful and this indicator will continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
John Gilbert							
LPI EH3		Statutory Environmental Protection Act inspections	None	No	No	Yes	This is not considered to be sufficiently key to be retained as an LPI, as it measures day to day statutory work. However, the information is useful and this indicator will continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
John Gilbert							
LPI EH4		Response to service requests (Consumer Protection)	None	No	No	Yes	This is not considered to be sufficiently key to be retained as an LPI, as it measures day to day statutory work. However, the information is useful and this indicator will continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
John Gilbert							
LPI EH5		Reporting of notifiable accidents within statutory periods	None	No	No	Yes	This is not considered to be sufficiently key to be retained as an LPI, as it measures day to day statutory work. However, the information is useful and this indicator will continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
John Gilbert							
LPI EH7		Food safety inspections carried out in accordance with Food Standards Agency targets	NI 184	N/A	N/A	N/A	No action required. Indicator carried forward into new National Indicator Set in broadly similar form.
John Gilbert							
LPI WM1		Missed refuse collections per 100,000 collections	None	No	No	Yes	The information provided by this indicator will be reported to the Waste Partnership Board, and will be monitored by way of key performance indicators contained in the waste management contract and through the relevant annual business plan.
John Gilbert							
LPI WM2		Missed collections as a percentage of exemptions	None	No	No	Yes	The information provided by this indicator will be reported to the Waste Partnership Board, and will be monitored through key performance indicators set out in the waste management contract and through the relevant annual business plan.
John Gilbert							
LPI WM3		Missed glass collections per 100,000 collections	None	No	No	Yes	The information provided by this indicator will be reported to the Waste Partnership Board, and will be monitored through key performance indicators set out in the waste management contract and through the relevant annual business plan.

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contract and through the relevant annual business plan.

LPI WM4	Missed dry recyclable collections per 100,000 collections	None	No	No	No	Yes	Th information provided by this indicator will be reported to the Waste Partnership Board, and will be monitored through key performance indicators set out in the waste management contract and through the relevant annual business plan.
John Gilbert							
LPI WM5	Missed garden collections per 100,000 collections	None	No	No	No	Yes	Th information provided by this indicator will be reported to the Waste Partnership Board, and will be monitored through key performance indicators set out in the waste management contract and through the relevant annual business plan.
John Gilbert							
Planning and Economic Development Portfolio							
PI (& KPI) REF & RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR	SUMMARY DEFINITION	NI REF	BVPI/LPI RECOMMENDATION			JUSTIFICATION OF RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR FOR RECOMMENDATION (RETENTION, DELETION, TRANSFER OF INDICATOR)	
			RETAIN AS LPI	DELETE	TRANSFER TO BUSINESS PLAN		
KPI BV106	Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land	None	Yes	No	No	This indicator seeks to minimise residential development on greenfield sites through the provision of additional housing on previously developed land. The retention of this indicator as an LPI will measure the Council's performance in this area.	
John Preston							
KPI BV109a	Percentage of major applications determined within 13 weeks	NI 157	N/A	N/A	N/A	No action required. Indicator carried forward into new National Indicator Set in broadly similar form.	
John Preston							
KPI BV109b	Percentage of minor applications determined within 8 weeks	NI 157	N/A	N/A	N/A	No action required. Indicator carried forward into new National Indicator Set in broadly similar form.	
John Preston							
KPI BV109c	Percentage of 'other' applications determined within 8 weeks	NI 157	N/A	N/A	N/A	No action required. Indicator carried forward into new National Indicator Set in broadly similar form.	
John Preston							

BV200a	Completion of Local Development Scheme	None	Yes	No	No	No	The development of a Local Development Scheme is a statutory requirement and this indicator ensures that local authorities plan effectively for their areas. In view of the importance of the Local Development Scheme, it is proposed that this indicator should be retained as an LPI.
John Preston							
BV200b	Achievement of milestones within Local Development Scheme	None	Yes	No	No	No	The development of a Local Development Scheme is a statutory requirement and this indicator ensures that local authorities plan effectively for their areas. In view of the importance of the Local Development Scheme, it is proposed that this indicator should be retained as an LPI.
John Preston							
KPI BV204	Number of appeals allowed against refusal of planning applications, as percentage of the total number of appeals against refusals	None	Yes	No	No	No	This indicator ensures that local authorities are not refusing planning applications in order to meet development control targets. In view of the importance of the development control function, it is proposed that this indicator should be retained as an LPI.
John Preston							
BV205	Performance against planning quality of service checklist	None	No	No	Yes		This is not considered to be sufficiently key to be retained as an LPI. However, the information is useful and this indicator will continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
John Preston							
BV219b	Percentage of Conservation Areas with up to date character appraisals	None	Yes	No	No	No	The development of character appraisals is a statutory requirement and this indicator ensures that local authorities effectively manage conservation areas. It is proposed that this indicator should be retained as an LPI.
John Preston							

Leisure and Young People Portfolio

PI (& KPI) REF & RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR	SUMMARY DEFINITION	NI REF	BVPI/LPI RECOMMENDATION			JUSTIFICATION OF RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR FOR RECOMMENDATION (RETENTION, DELETION, TRANSFER OF INDICATOR)
			RETAIN AS LPI	DELETE	TRANSFER TO BUSINESS PLAN	
KPI BV170a Derek Macnab	Number of visits to Council funded or part funded museums and galleries in the area per 1,000 population	None	No	No	Yes	The information provided by this indicator does not reflect the totality or diversity of leisure and cultural activity by the Council. However, the information is useful and this indicator will continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
BV170b Derek Macnab	Number of visits to Council funded or part funded museums and galleries in the area, that were in person per 1,000 population	None	No	No	Yes	The information provided by this indicator does not reflect the totality or diversity of leisure and cultural activity by the Council. However, the information is useful and this indicator will continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
KPI BV170c Derek Macnab	Number of pupils visiting museums and galleries in organised school groups	None	No	No	Yes	The information provided by this indicator does not reflect the totality or diversity of leisure and cultural activity by the Council. However, the information is useful and this indicator will continue to be monitored through the relevant annual business plan.
LP L1 Derek Macnab	Number of parishes in which the Council provides leisure opportunities	None	No	Yes	No	This indicator provides very little value. Relevant data is difficult to collect and does not provide any useful management information.
LP L2 Derek Macnab	Number of parishes in which the Council has enabled leisure opportunities	None	No	Yes	No	This indicator provides very little value. Relevant data is difficult to collect and does not provide any useful management information.
LP L3 Derek Macnab	Number of people benefiting from special activity prices	None	No	Yes	No	This indicator provides very little value. Relevant data is difficult to collect and does not provide any useful management information.

LP1 L4	Number of new leisure facilities enabled	None	No	Yes	No	This indicator provides very little value. Relevant data is difficult to collect and does not provide any useful management information.
Derek Macnab						
LP1 L5	Number of new leisure opportunities directly introduced by the Council	None	No	Yes	No	This indicator provides very little value. Relevant data is difficult to collect and does not provide any useful management information.
Derek Macnab						
LP1 L6	Number of new leisure opportunities enabled by the Council	None	No	Yes	No	This indicator provides very little value. Relevant data is difficult to collect and does not provide any useful management information.
Derek Macnab						
LP1 L7	Number of organisations that the Council has worked with to promote health and social inclusion	None	No	Yes	No	This indicator provides very little value. Relevant data is difficult to collect and does not provide any useful management information.
Derek Macnab						
LP1 L8	Number of patients referred by GP to Council activity scheme	None	No	Yes	No	The information provided by this indicator will be collected and reported to the Leisure Management Partnership Board, and will be monitored by way of key performance indicators contained in the leisure management contract.
Derek Macnab						
LP1 L9	Number of under 16 year olds attending swimming lessons	None	No	Yes	No	The information provided by this indicator will be collected and reported to the Leisure Management Partnership Board, and will be monitored by way of key performance indicators contained in the leisure management contract.
Derek Macnab						
LP1 L10	Number of event days staged at North Weald Airfield	None	No	Yes	No	This indicator provides very little value. Relevant data is difficult to collect and does not provide any useful management information.
Derek Macnab						
LP1 L11	Number of new leisure activities for 13-19 year olds enabled or provided by the Council	None	No	Yes	No	This indicator provides very little value. Relevant data is difficult to collect and does not provide any useful management information.
Derek Macnab						

LPIL12	Leisure centre customer satisfaction				None	No	Yes	No	The information provided by this indicator will be collected and reported to the Leisure Management Partnership Board, and will be monitored by way of key performance indicators contained in the leisure management contract.
	Derek Macnab								
Civil Engineering and Maintenance Portfolio									
PI (& KPI) REF & RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR	SUMMARY DEFINITION	NI REF	BVPI/LPI RECOMMENDATION			JUSTIFICATION OF RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR FOR RECOMMENDATION (RETENTION, DELETION, TRANSFER OF INDICATOR)			
			RETAIN AS LPI	DELETE	TRANSFER TO BUSINESS PLAN				
There are no performance indicators for this Portfolio for 2007/08									
Leader's Portfolio									
PI (& KPI) REF & RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR	SUMMARY DEFINITION	NI REF	BVPI/LPI RECOMMENDATION			JUSTIFICATION OF RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR FOR RECOMMENDATION (RETENTION, DELETION, TRANSFER OF INDICATOR)			
			RETAIN AS LPI	DELETE	TRANSFER TO BUSINESS PLAN				
There are no performance indicators for this Portfolio for 2007/08									

Report to: Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel

Date of Meeting: 27 March 2008



Portfolio: Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services (Councillor C. Whitbread)

Subject: Race Equality Scheme and progress with general equalities work

Officer contact for further information: D. Macnab (Ext 4051)

Committee Secretary: A. Hendry (Ext 4246)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the Scrutiny Panel:

Race Equality Scheme

1. Notes the requirement to update the Race Equality Scheme (RES) on a three yearly basis;
2. Comments on the proposed redrafted Scheme set out at Appendix One;
3. Notes that the results of community consultation on the revised draft will be reported to Cabinet; and
4. Recommends to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that a report be made to Cabinet proposing the adoption of the revised Scheme.

Equality Monitoring Policy

5. Notes the development of the Equality Monitoring Policy, and that Directorates will now consider which services should be monitored in fulfilment of the Council's statutory duties; and
6. Notes the outcomes from recent equality monitoring as set out in Appendix One to the RES 'Monitoring our Equality Duties 2007/08'

Equalities Impact Assessments

7. Notes that all Impact Assessments have been completed as required under the various strands of Equalities legislation, and that these form the basis for action planning in Directorates on equalities matters, and for the Corporate Equalities Action Plan.

Corporate Equalities Action Plan

8. Notes that this action plan has been updated to reflect progress with equalities work, and comments accordingly.

Consultation on the Gender and Disability Equality Schemes

9. Notes the consultation work taking place on the Gender and Disability Equality Schemes, and comments accordingly.

Report:

Race Equality Scheme

1. The Council is required under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to take actions which:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination;
- Promote equality of opportunity; and
- Promote good race relations.

2. In order to show how it will meet these duties, public bodies are required to produce a Race Equality Scheme (RES) and review it every three years. This also provides an opportunity for the Authority to explain the values, principles and standards that guide its approach to race equality. Our first RES covered the period 2005-2008, and is now therefore due for review.

3. The statutory guidance states that a RES must cover the following topics:

- a) Provide a statement of those functions and policies, or proposed policies, which have been assessed as relevant to the discharge of its duties to promote equality
- b) To set out its arrangements for –
 - Assessing and consulting on the likely impact of its proposed policies on the promotion of race equality;
 - Monitoring its policies for any adverse impact on the promotion of race equality;
 - Publishing the results of impact assessments and associated consultation and monitoring exercises;
 - Ensuring public access to information and services which it provides; and
 - Training staff in connection with its equalities duties.

4. The revised RES has been drafted with these considerations in mind and is attached at Appendix One. In addition to looking forward, the redrafted scheme also reports on actions that have been taken over the last three years in pursuance of the statutory duties, considering both our service delivery and employment functions.

5. The Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider the redrafted document, comment as appropriate and recommend that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee make a report to Cabinet proposing the adoption of the revised scheme. In tandem with this process it is proposed that the draft RES is sent to other Councils and relevant community groups for consultation purposes, and that any feedback received is reported to Cabinet and reflected as appropriate in the Scheme, prior to final adoption.

Equalities monitoring

6. As noted above, the Authority is required to monitor its policies and functions for any adverse impact on the promotion of race equality. Effective monitoring is seen as key to keeping track of how a policy is working, for example how different racial groups are affected by a service – how often and why people use a service, experience enforcement or legal action, or make complaints, and the nature of those complaints.

7. In addition to these service-related monitoring requirements, the Authority is also under a statutory duty to monitor employment outcomes concerning the numbers of people

who:

- Are in post, or who make applications for employment, training and promotion;
- Receive training or performance assessment procedures;
- Are involved in grievance procedures or subject to disciplinary procedures; and
- Cease employment with the Authority.

8. This employment monitoring information is to be published annually.

9. In order to ensure consistency in the collection of monitoring information, and to comply with data protection requirements, the Equality Monitoring Policy attached at appendix 4 to the RES has been drafted and agreed by Management Board. The Scrutiny Panel will note that this policy covers not only ethnic monitoring, but also gender, disability status and age. This is because the Authority has other monitoring requirements placed upon it by separate strands of equality legislation such as the Equality Act 2006 (the Gender Equality Duty) and the Disability Discrimination (Amendment) Act 2005 (the Disability Equality Duty). It is sensible to combine the various monitoring requirements in one overall process in order to avoid duplication and confusion.

10. Also attached to the RES, as Appendix One to it is a document called 'Monitoring our Equality Duties 2007/08'. This sets out information about how the Council has approached monitoring activity over the last three years, and the outcomes from this. It fulfils the statutory requirement to monitor and publish the results of monitoring. The Panel is asked to consider the outcomes from this and comment accordingly.

Equalities Impact Assessments

11. The Authority piloted its impact assessment process in 2004 and implemented a programme of carrying out assessments in 2005. In addition work has recently taken place to ensure that these are all up to date, and any new policies or functions have been properly assessed. To supplement this process the Performance Management Unit has also carried out a screening exercise of all Cabinet reports for equalities implications from January 2006 to the present. A process is currently being drawn up to ensure that all Cabinet reports consider the equalities implications of proposals being put forward, and that a new or updated impact assessment is completed where necessary.

12. The first RES set out priorities for the carrying out of impact assessments following the assessment of all Council functions for relevance to the duty to promote race equality. Attached to the RES at appendix 3 is a document called 'Schedule of completed Impact Assessments'. This shows the Council's success in carrying out this process, and the timetable for revisiting and updating completed assessments. These arrangements are complemented by the audit of Cabinet reports for equalities implications referred to above, ensuring that services and functions are assessed for relevance against the duty to promote race equality and their impact on minority groups is identified.

Corporate Equalities Action Plan

13. The impact assessment of Council policies and functions carried out in 2005 and thereafter led to the completion of a comprehensive appraisal of equalities issues across the Council. Services used the findings of the process to draw up individual equality actions that were fed into the business planning process. In addition, the assessment process identified a number of corporate issues, which were common to all, or the majority of Directorates. These formed the basis of the Corporate Equality Action Plan (CEAP).

14. The CEAP was agreed by Cabinet at its meeting of 11 June 2007, and it was also agreed that monitoring of progress against the plan would be the responsibility of the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel. In light of this decision an updated version of the CEAP is included as Appendix Five of the Race Equality Scheme. The Panel is asked to consider the progress made against the various actions and comment accordingly.

The Gender and Disability Equality Schemes

15. At its meeting of 16 April 2007 the Cabinet agreed a Disability Equality Scheme and Gender Equality Scheme, together with associated action plans. The legislation from which these schemes derive is similar to that pertaining to race equality, in that there should be an assessment of relevance of individual functions and policies followed by full equalities impact assessments where required, backed up by monitoring and consultation. In order to take equalities matters forward in a 'joined up' way, the Authority took the approach of carrying out combined impact assessments with respect to race, gender and disability when it commenced this process, thus avoiding duplication of effort. This approach has also been adopted with respect to the development of a corporate monitoring process as described above.

16. In addition to this process, both the Disability and Gender Equality Schemes require consultation with minority/disadvantaged/seldom heard groups. With respect to disability, officers have been meeting regularly with local disability groups to consult them on the issues and concerns they have. Each meeting has focused on a particular Directorate, with relevant Directors in attendance to both provide information and be challenged to make improvements. This process is yielding valuable information, and will inform an updated Disability Equality Action Plan in due course.

17. Consultation under the Gender Equality Scheme is about to commence, starting with a focus group session with delegates on 'Springboard', the Authority's Development Programme for Women.

18. The Panel is asked to note the consultation taking place on Gender and Disability Equality issues, and comment accordingly. A further, more detailed report on these schemes is also included elsewhere on this agenda.

Reason for decision:

19. To advise the Scrutiny Panel of progress with equalities work, and the fulfilment of the Council's statutory duties.

Options considered and rejected:

20. None. The Council is statutorily required to carry out these activities.

Consultation undertaken:

21. All Directors are involved in the development of Directorate level actions and relevant aspects of the CEAP. Consultation with disability groups is ongoing, and the revised RES will be sent for comments to a wide range of community groups in Essex.

Resource implications:

Budget/Personnel Provision: The actions set out in this report will be met within existing budgets.

Land: Nil

Council Plan/BVPP Reference: Council Plan Section 10 – 'Action Plan': action IP4.

Relevant Statutory Powers: Race Relations (Amendment Act) 2000, Gender Equality Act 2006, Disability Discrimination (Amendment) Act 2005.

Background Papers: None

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: Breaches under the Acts described in the report may also be actionable under, or in conjunction with, the Human Rights Act

Key Decision Reference (if required): None

Draft Race Equality Scheme 2008 - 20011

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5. Corporate Equalities Action Plan

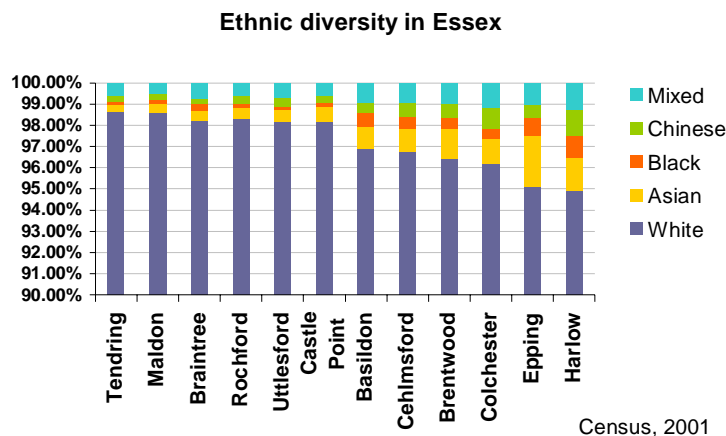
1. Introduction

Our first Race Equality Scheme covered the period 2005 to 2008. A review of that document has now taken place, providing an opportunity to reflect on our achievements over the last three years, and areas for development in the future. The result of that process is the production of this, our second Race Equality Scheme covering the period 2008 to 2011, and the updating of our Corporate Equality Action Plan which sets out the principal corporate actions we intend to take in order to further the development of equal opportunities in our District.

2. A district of diversity

Our community's ethnic profile

Epping Forest is a district of diversity. Located in Essex on the border with London, our Community is composed of a varied mix of suburban and rural areas. The Council has therefore long since recognised and sought to address the challenges of providing equitable service provision to customers and users who lead very diverse lifestyles, living in very different physical environments. The Council uses this experience of providing services to a varied array of people, to forward its equalities agenda.



As with the geography of the District, our community is composed of a diverse racial and cultural mix. Amongst district councils, Epping Forest houses significant Asian and Traveller communities in Essex, (albeit that the overall numbers are relatively low) with the second largest black population and overall diversity mix. As an employer, the Council has the most ethnically diverse workforce of any district in Essex, although again the overall numbers are relatively low.

It is in this context, as a geographically and culturally diverse district, that Epping Forest District Council aims to forward equalities in our District.

Our vision and commitment to race equality

We want Epping Forest District Council to be sensitive and responsive to the needs of the diverse communities that we serve, and to provide facilities and services that are free from unlawful discrimination. Epping Forest District Council is therefore committed to providing services to the community which reflect the needs and diversity of all its customers and service users. We recognise that discrimination in society exists, and seek to provide services fairly and equitably to all to redress this.

With this recognition in mind, the Council understands its position as a large provider of services and employment opportunities within the District, and in this position, its commensurate role in the Community. Therefore all services provided either directly by the Council, its contractors, partners or related agencies are covered by this commitment, as are all permanent, temporary and casual employees and all job applicants.

It is our commitment to promote equality of provision in council services and equal treatment to all service users, employees and job applicants within the framework of the law and without reference (where appropriate) to race, ethnic origin, nationality, political or religious beliefs, HIV status, disability, gender, sexual orientation, age or marital status.

We want to celebrate diversity and the richness that this brings to our community.

The importance of our Race Equality Scheme

Our Scheme is the primary strategic document on race equality for all of the policies and functions that Epping Forest District Council delivers. It codifies service users' rights, the Council's duties and through providing overarching mechanisms, it sets out actions that the Council will undertake to make it possible to provide services in an equitable way.

Linking-in with and expanding upon our corporate objectives, made within the Council's Corporate Equalities Action Plan, our revised Race Equality Scheme provides the direction required for the Council to comply with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (RR(A)A), and to take forward our ambition to promote equality of opportunity for all within the District.

This revised Race Equality Scheme replaces its predecessor, published in 2004/5. The revisions made in this Scheme will review the improvements that have been made since adopting our first Race Equality Scheme, outline our ambitions to promote equality of opportunity, as well as set in place a workable action plan to improve, monitor and evaluate the Council's effectiveness in meeting the requirements of the specific and general duties.

This Scheme is intended to be analytical, dynamic, adaptable to organisational change, and will be regularly reviewed and updated every three years, with annual reports on progress made available to the public.

3. The Council's duty as a public body

The Macpherson Report was written as a result of the public inquiry into the murder of Stephen Lawrence. The Report highlighted the problem of 'institutional racism', and that public bodies can both wittingly and unwittingly treat their service users differently due to their race or ethnicity. Institutional racism was therefore defined as the:

"Collective failure of an organisation to offer a professional and appropriate service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen in processes, practices, attitudes and behaviour, which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping, which disadvantage minority communities" (Paragraph 6.34, Stephen Lawrence Inquiry).

Contained within this Inquiry are seventy recommendations covering racial harassment, openness, discrimination, accountability, recruitment and selection, as well as other concerns. Some of these recommendations have been made law in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, including the duty for public services to have a Race Equality Scheme.

The Act places a **general statutory duty** on a wide range of public authorities to positively promote race equality in service delivery and employment, in order to prevent any deliberate or unwitting racial or ethnic discrimination. It also provides the Home Secretary with the power to impose a range of **specific duties** that are deemed necessary to assist authorities in the fulfilment of the general duty.

The Commission for Racial Equality has powers of enforcement over general and specific duties and is able to issue statutory codes of practice providing practical guidance to public authorities on how to fulfil the duties.

The scope of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act covers the authority in its role as:

- An employer
- A provider of services
- An agent of procurement
- A partner

It is therefore unlawful for authorities to discriminate on racial grounds, whether this is direct or indirect discrimination, while carrying out any of these functions.

The general duty

The general duty is a 'positive' one. That is, the Council is obliged to take positive action for improvement. The Act specifies that public authorities must fulfil their general duty to promote race equality by ensuring that all actions, where their outcome may have negative impacts according to race or ethnicity, must:

- Eliminate unlawful racial and ethnic discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity, and
- Promote good relations between persons of different racial and ethnic groups

Under the general duty the Council is required to define its functions – what it is that we do – and assess the impact that our activities or proposed activities have on racial equality, to decide whether our functions facilitate positive or negative outcomes.

Where current or proposed policies are demonstrated to have a negative impact on the elimination of racial discrimination, the promotion of racial equality or good race relations, the Council is expected to consider how that policy should be changed to counteract this.

The necessary changes then need to be made to ensure that in the long term, everything we do has a positive impact and is therefore assisting us in fulfilling our commitment to equality.

The specific duties

The specific duties have been designed as practical tools to assist public bodies to fulfil the general duty.

The specific duties require all public authorities to publish a Race Equality Scheme. This report therefore reviews the outcomes of our current Race Equality Scheme, ensures that the Council is compliant with the RR(A)A, and highlights what the Council intends to include in its future Race Equality Scheme.

The Council recognises that our current and future Race Equality Schemes must:

- Identify which of the Council's functions are relevant to the fulfilment of the general duty
- Set out arrangements for how we will assess our policies to determine the affect they have on race equality
- Set out how we will let people know about the results of our assessments, and any consultation and or monitoring exercises that we do
- Set out how we will ensure Council services are equally accessible to all
- Set out our arrangements for training staff on issues relevant to race equality

The employment duty

As a public body bound by the general duty, the Council is also subject to the employment duty, a specific duty which outlines the Council's responsibility to monitor employees by racial group. To fulfil our obligations as an employer, the Council agrees to complete the following actions:

- Produce and collate ethnic minority data relating to staff in post, applications for employment, training and promotion, staff in receipt of training, outcomes of performance assessment procedures, staff involved in grievance or disciplinary procedure and staff in employment.
- Publish the results of this monitoring on an annual basis
- Analyse the data to establish any patterns of inequality
- Take necessary action to identify and remove barriers and promote equality of opportunity

The purpose of this monitoring is not intended to be passive record keeping. Its objective is to provide data that the Council can actively utilise to regularly assess that the general duty is being met in exercising employment functions. The above monitoring information provides an indicator of:

- The existence of negative outcomes for ethnic minority staff and applicants
- Ways to remove any unfairness, disadvantage or possible discrimination identified

In this report, we intend to clarify our arrangements for fulfilling these requirements. This report therefore sets out our approach to the general and specific duties over the past three year period, and demonstrates the progress we have made.

4. Review of our progress

Performance indicators and improvement between 2005-2007

Performance indicators are government defined and audited measures that the Council is required to calculate and publish each year. These enable the Council to monitor its progress over time on a wide range of issues within the District.

In our first Race Equality Scheme, we identified a number of performance indicators that we would monitor in order to give direction on policies whose objective was to promote equality of opportunity for ethnic minority customers and service users.

These indicators were identified because they measure delivery outcomes and improvement in a number of key areas:

- The Council's compliance with the Equality Standard for local government
- The Council's duty to promote equality
- The Proportion of ethnic minorities in senior management
- The ethnic composition of the workforce
- Satisfaction with the Council as a landlord
- The Council's compliance with the Code of Practice for social landlords
- The number of racially-motivated incidents of crime recorded
- The percentage of racially-motivated incidents resulting in further action

Since the implementation of the Council's Race Equality Scheme, we have witnessed an improvement in many of these areas when responding to the needs of our staff and service users. Details of this are included in Appendix One to this document 'Monitoring our Equality Duties 2007/08'.

The Council as an equitable employer

As an employer, the Council is committed to hiring staff based on their skills and talents as potential employees, while at the same time ensuring that our hiring practices do not deter or discriminate. To ensure that the latter is not the outcome, the Council uses the employment duty to monitor and analyse the ethnic profile of our workforce. This assists us in identifying areas that require improving and what impact policies to tackle inequality are having.

The employment duty requires public bodies to collate and publish ethnic minority data relating to a number of areas, such as: numbers of staff in post, applications for employment, training and promotion, staff in receipt of training, outcomes of performance assessment procedures, staff involved in grievance or disciplinary procedure and staff in employment.

At present, the ethnic origin of all staff is monitored digitally by a shared Human Resources and Payroll monitoring system. This shared system offers an effective means for the Council to identify trends between ethnic origin, job role, seniority and salary, in order to determine the existence of any employment segregation or ethnic penalty. Details of our performance are included in Appendix One.

Training and staff development

The Code of Practice for the RR(A)A directs local authorities towards ensuring that the staff responsible for meeting the general and specific duties are aware of their responsibilities and have the skills to carry them out. This requirement includes the duty for the Council to consider what degree of training staff will require on the general and specific duties, and that training should be relevant to job function and seniority.

The Council recognised early on, that these requirements for equality training represented a corporate training need, and that it was not sufficient to rely on individual staff appraisals or service level plans to take forward this type of training. The Council has therefore made equality and diversity training mandatory for all posts, as the Council seeks to prevent the situation where the lack of such knowledge or skills could lead to instances of unlawful discrimination, or perceived discrimination by ethnic minority staff and service users.

This approach was welcomed by service managers, who indicated their support for an enhanced programme of equality training during the Council's first cycle of impact assessments in 2004. Resources for this training have been successfully allocated and training has been completed by the vast majority of staff, tailored according to seniority within the organisation and across a wide array of specialised job functions.

Monitoring data on this training is collected via the number of applications for training, turnout and through individual satisfaction appraisals of the course content, which includes an equal opportunities questionnaire for all attendees. This information is held digitally by the Human Resources unit, and the outcomes of such data have been used in the formation of this revised Race Equality Scheme.

In addition to mandatory equality training, courses designed to address general management and staffing issues are also mindful of equality and diversity issues. Examples of two courses in which this approach is evident is in training relating to Managing Absence and Workplace Harassment and Bullying. In all courses, as with these examples, the Council's Learning and Development Advisor ensures linkages of this nature through the procurement of bespoke EFDC-focused training, whose content can be adapted to forward the Council's equality objectives, rather than purchasing 'off the shelf' solutions. Details are included in Appendix One.

5. Improving the effectiveness of our Race Equality Scheme

Shared ownership for the race equality Scheme

All employees are expected to contribute to the achievement of our equalities objectives and the Council will ensure that individuals are aware of their personal and professional responsibility to support equal opportunities, both corporately and also in service delivery.

To ensure adherence to our commitment to equal opportunities, managers and supervisors will be expected to:

- Assist in the development and implementation of equal opportunities action plans and the impact assessment process within their service areas

- Review the effectiveness of policies and functions designed to promote equal opportunities, review all related action plans and communicate their findings to senior management
- Ensure that within their areas of responsibility, the standards established by this document and other related policies such as those on harassment are followed

The Council expects that all employees will:

- Not harass, abuse, or intimidate others on account of their race, gender, age etc
- Co-operate with any measures introduced to ensure equal opportunity
- Report any suspected discriminatory acts or practices
- Not persuade or attempt to persuade others to practice unlawful discrimination
- Not victimise others for reporting or providing evidence of discrimination
- Not lobby job applicants in an attempt to discourage them from applying for or accepting a particular job

Breaches of these provisions may result in disciplinary action being taken against an individual.

Meeting the employment duty

Through its Race Equality Scheme, the Council's Human Resources unit has taken its lead from the employment duty, whose objective is to eliminate the ethnic penalty that some employees may face on the grounds of their skin colour, place of birth and religious or cultural beliefs and practices. In monitoring key areas where inequality is likely to be evident, a primary factor in eliminating employment barriers is through the Council being aware of the changing ethnic profile and perceptions of our workforce.

This awareness is critical to identifying the existence of negative consequences, formed as a result of the Council's policies or functions. Where these policies are proven to have a direct or indirect negative impact on ethnic minority users, the Council will attempt to alter the policy or look for alternatives that do not discriminate.

To meet this objective, the Council will continue to:

- Monitor the ethnic profile of data relating to staff in post, applications for employment, training and promotion, staff in receipt of training, outcomes of performance assessment procedures, staff involved in grievance or disciplinary procedure and staff in employment
- Conduct qualitative and quantitative research relating to equal opportunities in employment
- Analyse, report on and publish the findings of data collected on an annual basis
- Create targets and corresponding actions to ensure that ethnic minority staff receive equal training and development opportunities
- Commit to reviewing policy and practices that are identified as unlawfully discriminative to ethnic minority staff

Staff development and training

Key to the success of our revised Race Equality Scheme, are the staff who will be delivering our equality agenda. It is therefore essential that we continue to provide an

effective, informative and on-going programme of training and guidance that is reactive to:

- New employment legislation
- New or changed policies, procedures and practices, including guidance on carrying out impact assessments, monitoring data, consulting with stakeholders, challenging discrimination, dealing with harassment and fair recruitment and selection
- Identifying training needs detected through observation of poor performance via performance monitoring data, but also through the findings of impact assessments, complaints and harassment issues

Some of these require attendance at formal training sessions and some can be dealt with via other means such as the circulation of written guidance or cascaded via team briefings. The Council is committed to the general principle that every employee should attend some form of formal equality and diversity training, especially where skills need to be developed to provide equally accessible services. Therefore, in addition to the provision of mandatory equality training, the Council will also seek to:

- Periodically remind all managers and employees of the Council's aims and equality targets, and how well it is achieving them through performance monitoring data
- Provide guidance on new topics or interpretations of equality legislation, and to ensure that these are communicated
- Mainstream its equality training. Since equality is a cross-cutting issue, the need to promote equality should also be included in the brief for all other training topics where this could be relevant

Member training

The Council will seek to continue its training programme for members, including:

- Equality and diversity issues as appropriate to the training for new and existing members
- Fair recruitment and selection practices for members involved in senior appointments
- Understanding how members' decisions could have a unintended impact on the needs of individuals with different cultural or religious needs.

Work-related harassment and bullying

The Council is committed to creating a working environment where employees do not suffer harassment or bullying on any grounds, specifically their race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age or religion. We believe all employees have the right to be treated with dignity and respect, and have an equal responsibility to treat colleagues and members of the public in the same manner. To this end we have introduced a Violence at Work Policy and are currently reviewing our Harassment and Bullying Procedure.

Shared ownership for the employment duty

All employees are expected to contribute to the achievement of our equalities objectives and the Council will ensure that individuals are aware of their personal and

professional responsibility to support equal opportunities, both corporately and also in service delivery.

The Council will therefore seek to:

- Uphold the provisions made in its harassment and bullying policy
- Monitor ethnic data relating to the indicators required under the employment duty
- Publish the number and ethnic composition of these indicators annually in a report to Management Board, via the Council's website and in print on request by individuals

To ensure adherence to our commitment to the employment duty, managers and supervisors will be expected to:

- Assist in the development and implementation of equal opportunities action plans and the impact assessment process within their service areas
- Review the effectiveness of policies and functions designed to promote equal opportunities, review all related action plans and communicate their findings to senior management
- Ensure that within their areas of responsibility, the standards established by this document and other related policies such as those on harassment are followed

In addition to managers' commitment, the Council also expects that all employees will:

- Co-operate with any measures introduced to ensure equal opportunity
- Report any suspected discriminatory acts or practices
- Not persuade or attempt to persuade others to practice unlawful discrimination
- Not victimise others for reporting or providing evidence of discrimination
- Not harass, abuse, or intimidate others on account of their race, gender, age etc
- Not lobby job applicants in an attempt to discourage them from applying for or accepting a particular job

6. Impact assessment and ethnic monitoring

Identifying relevant functions and policies

In 2003 we carried out an exercise to identify all of the Council's key services, assess these for any negative impacts for those with ethnic minority backgrounds, and to determine which are relevant to enable us to fulfil the general and specific duties. In doing this we recognised that we needed to know what functions/policies would present barriers to equality for our users and employees, and what functions/policies provide us with the best opportunities to make improvements in our commitment to promote equality.

To determine what services were of relevance, we assessed them against the following criteria:

- What parts of the general and specific duties applied to the service? Did the service have the potential to:

- a) Eliminate Discrimination?
 - b) Promote Equality of Opportunity?
 - c) Promote Good Race Relations?
- Was there any potential for different ethnic groups to be negatively affected when they come into contact with the service or the outcomes of a policy?
 - Was there any evidence of public concern that there were differences in outcomes for different ethnic groups, when they come into contact with the service?

All of the Council's relevant functions and policies were identified and prioritised. Those given highest priority were key public services and policies that directly interface, or regulate interaction with customers – both externally and internally. They may also be services where we identify the most need for improvement to meet our equalities objectives.

The highest priority services were looked at first to assess the impact of the services' policies on race equality. Our list of prioritised Services is attached at Appendix Two. Our table of completed Impact Assessments together with review dates is set out at Appendix Three. Currently all required Impact Assessments are completed.

Assessing for impact

Where we identified problems or believed a policy could be altered to have a more positive impact, we put in place arrangement to amend the policy or take other appropriate actions.

To aid this process, the Council has used feedback from the previous cycle of impact assessments, conducted in 2004/05 to re-develop its Impact Assessment Tool. This aims to draw out more detailed information on the likelihood of negative affects existing, and also for whom. This Tool is now being used in the Council's next cycle of impact assessments, including assessments of new functions or policies.

The following issues are being considered during the re-assessment of functions or policies:

- What is the intention of the policy and who is responsible for it?
- Who are the potential users of the services to which the policy relates and how has the policy been adapted to take their needs into account?
- Who are the target groups for the policy and what other groups are affected by it?
- What consultation has taken place with the local community about the policy?
- Does the policy assist the council in meeting the general duty to: promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, and positively influence race relations?
- The monitoring that takes place of the views of service users.
- How are services accessed and do some groups have difficulties relating to access?
- Can either direct or indirect discrimination be identified in the policy or the way in which it is delivered?
- Could any adjustments be made to the policy to overcome any aspects of it that present barriers to service users?

After policies have been assessed, services will be expected to update their action plans detailing how they are going to amend their policies, and the way they are delivered, to overcome any identified negative impacts on race equality. These action plans will be scrutinised on an annual basis.

As noted above, these processes will not only apply to existing policies of the relevant services. The same questions will be asked of any new policies that Directorates are intending to implement. This will assist race equality to become an automatic consideration in the development of our services. The results of impact assessments will be published when completed via the Council's website, and in print upon individual request.

We intend that the end result of this process will be to "mainstream" the elimination of discrimination and the promotion of equality of opportunity and good race relations, by making these key considerations in the development of our policies and how we deliver them. We will continue to provide the services we do at present, but will do so in a way that takes due regard of the needs of all those who live within the district.

Assessment of the Council's new functions and policies

The results of impact assessments are built into reviews of both existing and new policy development. Where negative impacts have been found to exist, these will be published in committee reports that make recommendations for amendment to existing policies or the creation of new ones.

7. Monitoring

When assessing policies and functions each service must go through a process of reassessment every three years. Between this period, policies identified as posing either a negative impact or a potential one for race equality and the other parts of the general duty, must be monitored through the collection of appropriate data and consultation exercises.

Management Board agreed an Equality Monitoring Policy and Procedure in December 2007 which ensures that appropriate monitoring information is captured on a consistent basis, mindful of Data Protection requirements. Directors are now considering which elements of their service should be monitored. The Equality Monitoring Policy is attached at Appendix Four.

The existing monitoring data, gathered between the last series of impact assessments and this revised Race Equality Scheme, has been used to inform the current impact assessment process. This has led to a re-development of our Impact Assessment Tool, to gain more insight into the potential for negative impacts. It is important we collect information that can be compared over time to ensure that we can register noticeable improvements in the service we provide.

We are also committed to monitoring the demographic make-up of our District, so we have a clear idea of the diversity of needs that exist, and have a commensurate commitment to monitoring the views of our service users, so we can identify levels of dissatisfaction and respond to these. In order to do this, the Council will conduct customer satisfaction surveys, partnering with other Essex district councils to compare performance. Although the statutory requirement for this is 3 years, Epping Forest District Council will be conducting these annually, as part of our drive to understand our District in greater detail.

Data-driven decision-making

The Census 2001 contains a wealth of information concerning the demographics of the Council's ethnic minority communities. However, much of this information will be 8 years old by the time this Race Equality Scheme is published. While this data can reveal the ethnic profile of the District, this information alone is not sufficient to ensure our policies and functions support all of our communities.

The Council is keen to generate its own data, both through the use of national statistics, consultation and systems monitoring. This information is key to creating and ensuring that policies and functions that the Council is responsible for do not adversely affect those we are charged with serving.

8. Consultation process and findings

Why consult?

Consultation can help the Council to make better more informed policy and service decisions. This is because:

- Consultation allows the Council to gain information directly from stakeholders and the public. This can provide an additional context to a policy proposal, check the Council's assumptions, generate new ideas and provide a broader view than Council officers might otherwise be able to provide.
- The consultation process encourages thorough project planning, early input from stakeholders and careful consideration of all available options.
- Consultation highlights potential problems early on, and allows the Council to remedy these through better policy-making and service delivery.

Consultation is also effective in increasing trust and engagement with our stakeholders. This is because consultation:

- Promotes transparency and accountability
- Improves awareness and understanding of the policy or service area and can address uninformed public/stakeholder assumptions
- Encourages public ownership of the policy, therefore increasing public commitment to it

It is the policy of Epping Forest District Council to consult with the people who are affected by the decisions we make and use the services we provide. The Council's consultation strategy encourages people to take part in discussions, debates and decision-making and improves our links with all sections of the community. In doing this, we are seeking to achieve greater participation in local democracy, especially for those who may previously have felt excluded. We want everyone who comes into contact with council services to feel involved and be able to influence policy and strategy.

The Council's consultation strategy sets out:

- Why we are consulting
- How we will consult
- Who we will consult

- When we will consult
- How consultation will be co-ordinated to make sure resources are used effectively
- How the outcomes will be reported

We believe the outcomes of improving the consultations we carry out will be:

- Improved understanding
- Improved relationships
- Improved quality of service delivery
- More responsive service delivery
- Priorities, policies and budgets based on people's needs and expectations

We use a wide variety of methods to consult and are committed to further exploring how we can increase participation in consultation exercises. We intend to publish the results of these.

Publishing consultation findings

Future, past and present consultation exercises are published on the Council's website when the Council's Consultation Register is updated. This is considered by the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel and the Cabinet on an annual basis.

The results of individual consultation exercises are published in locations appropriate to each exercise. This includes in our housing service newsletter to Council tenants, the Council's Forester magazine, via leaflets in the Civic Offices and on the Council's website.

9. Information access

Access to information and services

Epping Forest District Council is committed to providing services to the community which reflect the needs and diversity of all its customers and service users. The Council will provide services to all of its diverse community in a way which is free from unlawful discrimination. We need to ensure that people know about the services we provide and that they do not face barriers when trying to use them. The process of assessing our services for their race equality impact is intended to uncover problems people may have accessing our services and we are committed to responding to these and planning to amend our services to overcome them.

We will learn from good practice elsewhere and seek to implement this in the services we provide. We will listen to our service users and work with them to develop a service they can access and fully benefit from.

Publication of assessment, consultation and monitoring outcomes

The Council will publish on its website:

- The results of any consultations about the RES
- An evaluation of progress against the RES after the first year of operation
- The results of any consultations on the race equality dimensions of new initiatives relevant to the Council's race equality duties

- Ethnic monitoring data on the Council's staff as part of an annual equal opportunities report

Public access to information

The public accesses the information that the Council publishes largely through the Council's website. We will make sure that the design of the website enables users to easily locate all information and publications.

An equal opportunities report will be published on the Council's website on an annual basis, where it can be accessed by the public. This will contain a review of progress over the year, including statutory information on equalities to comply with the employment duty, and also an annual review of progress against the Council's Corporate Equalities Action Plan.

10. Complaints by staff, service users and other organisations

Our approach to complaints

Epping Forest District Council has a general five-stage complaints procedure. The procedure is available on the Council's website and can also be obtained through any council information office, housing office or leisure centre. Members of the public should raise concerns about the Council's fulfilment of its commitment to equal opportunities through this complaints procedure.

When receiving complaints, whether from individuals, organisations or education providers, the Council follows published complaints procedures, which include the following principles:

- Complaints will be handled speedily and with rigorous standards for action and keeping people informed.
- The process will be consistent, treating people in similar circumstances in similar ways.
- Investigation of complaints will be thorough and objective.
- We will consider and respond to complaints in a fair and even-handed way.
- A full response will be provided which addresses all the issues raised.
- Clear information will be provided on what to do if people are unhappy with the response.
- Complaints will be regularly monitored.
- Action will be identified where necessary to secure improvements.

11. Action Planning for Race Equality

Our Race Equality Scheme must be underpinned by actions and commitments if it is to have meaning. The Performance Management Unit is responsible for co-ordinating and communicating corporate equalities actions, and the production and monitoring of our Corporate Equalities Action Plan (CEAP). This sets out the Council's intended actions to drive equalities forward in a co-ordinated way across all Directorates. It is attached at Appendix Five, and is based upon the framework provided by the Equality Standard For Local Government, using the following headings:

- Leadership and corporate commitment
- Consultation, community development and scrutiny
- Service delivery and customer care
- Employment and training

It has been reviewed in tandem with this review of our Race Equality Scheme, and progress is reported annually to the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel.

12. Review of this Race Equality Scheme

This scheme will be reviewed on a three-yearly basis. The next review is due in 2011. That said, if there is a requirement to review the Race Equality Scheme before this date for any reason, this will take place.

Monitoring our equality duties – 2007/08

INTRODUCTION

1. The purpose of this document is to set out information that the Authority collects concerning the monitoring of our policies and functions for adverse impact under the various strands of the equalities legislation, and where appropriate, to show how we are acting on that information. This paper provides a 'snapshot' of activity, and the wide range of monitoring which takes place. It sets the monitoring information in the wider social and demographic context of the District as a whole for comparison purposes, and fulfils the requirement placed upon the Council under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to publish monitoring data in respect of its employment duties. In addition, the report aims to provide comprehensive equality monitoring information across the areas of race, gender and disability for completeness.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE VARIOUS STRANDS OF EQUALITY LEGISLATION

Our responsibilities under the Race Equality Duty

2. Under the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 (RR(A)A) the Council is required to have arrangements in place for the monitoring of its policies and functions for adverse impact. There are a range of ways in which the Council carries out monitoring, as follows:

- Statistical analysis of ethnic monitoring data;
- Satisfaction surveys (analysed by the racial or other minority groups to which the people surveyed belong);
- Random or targeted surveys; and
- Meetings, focus groups and other consultation events.

3. In addition, the Act requires the Council to undertake specific monitoring with respect to its employment duties. By reference to the racial groups to which they belong, the Council monitors the following:

- (a) the numbers of -
 - I. staff in post, and
 - II. applications for employment, training and promotion, from each such group, and
- (b) the numbers of staff from each such group who -
 - I. receive training;
 - II. benefit or suffer detriment as a result of performance assessment procedures;
 - III. are involved in grievance procedures;
 - IV. are the subject of disciplinary procedures; or
 - V. cease employment with the Council.

Our responsibilities under the Gender Equality Duty

4. Although less specific than the duties placed upon the Council under the Race Equality Scheme, the Council is required to gather information on the effects of its policies and practices on men and women in employment, services and the performance of its functions. It is also required to consult relevant employees, service users and others.

Our responsibilities under the Disability Equality Duty

5. There are a number of responsibilities placed upon the Council:

- a) To set out arrangements in the Disability Equality Scheme for the gathering of information on the effect of its policies and practices on disabled persons (this includes applicants for posts and training opportunities, the effects of performance reviews, grievances and disciplinaries on disabled staff, and termination of employment);
- b) To set out arrangements in the Disability Equality Scheme for the gathering of information on the effect of its policies and practices on the recruitment, development and retention of its disabled employees;
- c) To set out arrangements in the Disability Equality Scheme for the gathering of information on the extent to which the services it provides, and those other functions it performs, take account of the needs of disabled persons.

6. The provisions described in paragraphs 2 – 5 above require the monitoring of Council services and policies for adverse impact.

THE DISTRICT EQUALITIES PROFILE

7. The appendix to this report sets out the distribution of our minority ethnic communities, people with disabilities and men/women across the district, using 2001 census information, or more recent data where available. This information can be summarised as follows:

- a) The 'White' or 'White British' population is the largest ethnic group in the District and is evenly distributed;
- b) The second largest ethnic group is 'Asian' or 'Asian British', with a concentration in the south of the District;
- c) The District's gender split conforms to the national pattern (ie slightly more women than men), but in 3 wards the proportion of women is higher. This is likely to be due to the presence of single elderly women; and
- d) There is a concentration of populations with limiting long term illness in the suburban areas of the District.

8. These considerations provide a useful background to the monitoring information contained in this report.

OUR MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS AND OUTCOMES – 2006/07

9. In December 2007 Management Board agreed a policy for the carrying out of ethnic, gender, disability and age – related monitoring. This policy brought together our existing approach to monitoring in a framework of best practice and core

organisational standards. Directors are now using this framework to assess the adequacy of existing monitoring arrangements, supplementing or amending these where necessary.

10. This section sets out details of the current monitoring which is in place across the District, and the outcomes that result from this activity.

a) Human Resources Monitoring

11. Although monitoring information in this area has been collected for a number of years, it has not been consistently reported. Therefore, this section sets out monitoring outcomes for the financial years 2005/06 and 2006/07. A detailed analysis of this data is provided below.

Table 1: Baseline data about the make up of the Council workforce, 2005/06 and 2006/07

Indicator	2005/06 Outturn	2006/07 Outturn
Number of staff in post (FTE)	658	653
Number of males in post	300 (45.59%)	292 (44.72%)
Number of females in post	358 (54.41%)	361 (55.28%)
Number of staff declaring they have a disability (males and females)	51 (7.75%)	37 (5.67%)
Number of males declaring they have a disability	23 (3.50%)	22 (3.37%)
Number of females declaring they have a disability	28 (4.25%)	15 (2.29%)
Number of staff declaring an ethnic origin other than White (British/English/Welsh/Scottish) or 'White other'	21 (3.19%)	24 (3.68%)
Number of males declaring an ethnic origin other than White (British/English/Welsh/Scottish) or 'White other'	8 (1.22%)	9 (1.38%)
Number of females declaring an ethnic origin other than White (British/English/Welsh/Scottish) or 'White other'	13 (1.98%)	15 (2.30%)

Table 2: Applicants for posts and promotions by gender, ethnicity and disability, 2005/06 and 2006/07

Indicator	2005/06 outturn	2006/07 outturn
Applicants for posts by gender:		
Male	754	427
Female	684	478
Shortlisted applicants by gender:		
Male	165	94
Female	205	119
Successful appointments by gender		
Male	35	29
Female	38	36
Applicants for posts by disability		
Disabled	31	16
Able bodied	1372	892

Unspecified	80	52
Shortlisted applicants by disability		
Disabled	3	10
Able bodied	367	203
Unspecified	0	0
Successful appointments by disability		
Disabled	0	5
Able bodied	73	36
Unspecified	0	0
Applicants for posts by ethnicity		
White British		
White English	986	685
White Scottish	13	7
White Welsh	9	5
British Other	6	2
Irish	16	6
Any other white background	56	24
White Mixed		
White and Black Caribbean	15	3
White and Black African	3	5
White and Asian	5	3
Any other mixed background	10	0
Asian		
Asian Indian	55	29
Pakistani	27	16
Bangladeshi	11	6
Any other Asian background	21	12
Black		
Black Caribbean	29	14
Black African	87	51
Any other black background	8	1
Chinese	15	6
Any other Chinese background	1	1
Other Ethnic Group	8	19
Unspecified	102	65
Shortlisted applicants by ethnicity		
White British		
White English	303	181
White Scottish	5	4
White Welsh	1	0
British Other	0	0
Irish	2	2
Any other white background	10	1
White Mixed		
White and Black Caribbean	0	0
White and Black African	0	0
White and Asian	0	0
Any other mixed background	3	0
Asian		
Asian Indian	7	2
Pakistani	6	1
Bangladeshi	3	2
Any other Asian background	2	3
Black		

Black Caribbean	3	2
Black African	12	4
Any other black background	2	0
Chinese	2	0
Any other Chinese background	0	0
Other Ethnic Group	1	2
Unspecified	8	6
Successful appointments by ethnicity		
White British		
White English	69	56
White Scottish	0	3
White Welsh	0	0
British Other	0	0
Irish	0	0
Any other white background	0	1
White Mixed		
White and Black Caribbean	0	0
White and Black African	0	0
White and Asian	0	0
Any other mixed background	0	0
Asian		
Asian Indian	2	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Any other Asian background	0	1
Black		
Black Caribbean	1	0
Black African	0	1
Any other black background	0	0
Chinese	0	0
Any other Chinese background	0	0
Other Ethnic Group	0	0
Unspecified	1	3
Number of existing male staff promoted internally as a result of a recruitment exercise	0	3
Number of existing female staff promoted internally as a result of a recruitment exercise	1	6
Number of existing ethnic minority staff promoted internally as a result of a recruitment exercise		0
Number of existing disabled staff promoted internally as a result of a recruitment exercise		1 female

Table 3: Staff who have received PDRs by race, gender and disability, 2005/06 and 2006/07

Indicator	2005/06 outturn	2006/07 outturn
Number of staff who received a PDR	372 (56.33% of staff)	324 (49.62%)
Male staff who received PDRs	142 (38.17% of staff receiving PDRs were male. 47.33% of male staff in the Council received a PDR.)	137 (42.28% of staff receiving PDRs were male. (46.92% of male staff in the Council received a PDR)
Female staff who received	230 (61.82% of staff	187 (57.72% of staff

PDRs	receiving PDRs were female. 64.25% of female staff in the Council received a PDR.)	receiving PDRs were male. (51.80% of female staff in the Council received a PDR)
Ethnic minority staff who received PDRs	13 (3.49% of staff receiving PDRs were from an ethnic origin other than 'White British', 'White Other', 'Irish', 'Any other white background'). 37.14% of ethnic minority staff in the Council received a PDR).	8 (2.47% of staff receiving PDRs were from an ethnic background other than 'White British', 'White other', 'Irish', 'Any other white background'). 33.33% of ethnic minority staff in the Council received a PDR).
Disabled staff who received PDRs	12 (3.23% of staff receiving PDRs declared themselves as disabled. 23.53% of disabled staff in the Council received PDRs.)	23 (7.10% of staff receiving PDRs declared themselves as disabled. 62% of disabled staff in the Council received PDRs).

Table 4: Applicants for staff training by race, gender and disability, 2005/06 and 2006/07

Indicator	2005/06 outturn	2006/07 outturn
Number of staff who applied for training	606 (92.10% of staff applied for training.)	457 (69.98% of staff applied for training.)
Male staff who applied for training	196 (32.34% of applicants for training were male. 65.33% of male staff applied for training)	185 (40.48% of applicants for training were male. 63.35% of male staff applied for training).
Female staff who applied for training	410 (67.66% of applicants for training were female. 114.53% of female staff applied for training ie. a number of individuals made more than one application).	272 (59.52% of applicants for training were female. 75.35% of female staff applied for training.
Ethnic minority staff who applied for training	10 staff who applied for training were from an ethnic origin other than 'White' or 'White Other' (1.65% of all applicants for training were from an ethnic minority. 28.57% of ethnic minority staff applied for training.)	4 staff who applied for training were from an ethnic origin other than 'White', 'Irish or 'White other'. (0.87% of all applicants for training were from an ethnic minority. 15.38% of ethnic minority staff applied for training.)
Disabled staff who applied for training	11 disabled staff applied for training (1.82% of all	16 disabled staff applied for training (3.50% of all

	applicants for training were disabled. 21.57% of ethnic minority staff applied for training).	applicants for training were disabled. 43.24% of disabled staff applied for training).
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Table 5: Recipients of staff training by race, gender and disability, 2005/06 and 2006/07

Indicator	2005/06 outturn	2006/07 outturn
Total number of staff who received training	613 (93.16% of staff received training).	654 (100% of staff received training – some were multiple applications).
Male staff who received training	259 (42.25% of recipients of training were male. 86.33% of male employees received training)	388 (59.32% of recipients of training were male. 132.88% of males received training ie. some males attended more than one training event.)
Female staff who received training	354 (57.75% of recipients of training were female. 98.88% of female employees received training).	266 (40.67% of recipients of training were female. 73.68% of female employees received training).
Ethnic minority staff who received training	24 (3.92% of recipients of training were from an ethnic origin other than 'White' or 'White other'. 68.57% of ethnic minority employees received training).	15 (2.29% of recipients of training were from an ethnic origin other than 'White British', 'White other' or 'Irish'. 62.50% of ethnic minority employees received training).
Disabled staff who received training	5 (0.82% of recipients of training were disabled. 9.80% of disabled employees received training)	16 (2.45% of recipients of training were disabled. 43.24% of disabled employees received training).

Table 6: Staff subject to disciplinary action by gender, ethnicity and disability, 2005/06 and 2006/07

Indicator	2005/06 outturn	2006/07 outturn
Male staff who were subject to disciplinary action	0	4
Female staff who were subject to disciplinary action	2	0
Ethnic minority staff who were subject to disciplinary action	0	0
Disabled staff who were subject to disciplinary action	0	0

Table 7: Staff raising grievances at stage 2 or above by gender, ethnicity and disability, 2005/06 and 2006/07

Indicator	2005/06 outturn	2006/07 outturn
Male staff who raised a grievance	0	1
Female staff who raised a grievance	0	0
Ethnic minority staff who raised a grievance	0	0
Disabled staff who raised a grievance	0	0

Table 8: Staff raising issues under the Harassment and Bullying Procedure by gender, ethnicity and disability, 2005/06 and 2006/07

Indicator	2005/06 outturn	2006/07 outturn
Male staff who raised an issue under this procedure	1	0
Female staff who raised an issue under this procedure	0	0
Ethnic minority staff who raised an issue under this procedure	0	0
Disabled staff who raised an issue under this procedure	0	0

Table 9: Staff leaving the Authority on grounds of resignation, non renewal of a fixed term contract or redundancy, by gender, ethnicity and disability, 2005/06 and 2006/07

Indicator	2005/06 outturn	2006/07 outturn
Male staff who left	37	36
Female staff who left	58	47
Ethnic minority staff who left	1	6
Disabled staff who left	2	2

12. The significance of this data is now considered. (Information relating to Human Resources BVPs is considered separately at section d below).

The Council as an equitable employer

13. As an employer, the Council is committed to recruiting staff based on their skills and talents as potential employees, while at the same time ensuring that our recruitment practices do not deter or discriminate unlawfully. To ensure that the latter is not the outcome, the Council uses the employment duty (RR(A)A) to monitor and analyse the ethnic profile of our workforce and in addition to monitor the gender and disability profiles. This assists us in identifying areas that require improving and what impact policies to tackle inequality are having. General information about our workforce profile is provided above. This section considers the significance of this and related data.

The proportion of ethnic minority employees, women and staff with disabilities joining and leaving the Council

14. With regard to staff joining and leaving from ethnic minority backgrounds, improvement has been mixed. There exist factors that the Council will continue to monitor and address, but also considerable successes that sets Epping Forest District Council apart from our neighbouring authorities.

15. Between 2004 and 2007, the number of staff from ethnic minority backgrounds declined from 5.2% to 3% of the total number hired. This is a challenge, insofar as if we are to achieve a workforce whose ethnic profile matches that of our community, we must seek opportunities to raise the proportion of ethnic minority staff to 5% of the total workforce once again.

16. However, in contrast to this, the number of ethnic minority staff leaving the employment of the Council has almost halved, from 14.6% to 8.2% of the total number of employees leaving, over the same period. We will therefore continue to increase the retention of ethnic minority staff to levels that are proportional in terms of the ethnic profile of the workforce.

17. Although the proportion of ethnic minority staff leaving appears to be greater than those joining, in real-terms the Council has achieved significant improvement in raising the number and proportion of ethnic minority employees. Between 2004 and 2007, the proportion of staff from ethnic minority groups within the workforce increased from 2.5% to 3.8%, due to greater numbers of employees joining than leaving over this period. Because of this, the Council has been able to create a more ethnically diverse workforce. This is an achievement we are extremely proud of.

18. With respect to men and women joining and leaving the Authority, the data for 2005/06 and 2006/07 show that more women than men joined the Council in both years. This is reflected in the proportion of the workforce made up by women and men in that 55% of the workforce is female. However, as noted elsewhere in this report, this proportion is not reflected equally at all levels, and tapers off at more senior levels.

19. The picture for the appointment of staff with disabilities is mixed. In 2005/06 no disabled staff were appointed, but in 2006/07 5 staff with disabilities took up posts. There was a significant reduction in the number of female disabled staff working for the Authority, but no clearly discernable reason for this is known.

Applications for employment from ethnic minority candidates, women and people with disabilities

20. In 2006/07, 126 applications for employment with the Council were received by people from an ethnic minority background. This represents 14% of the 895 applications the Council received in the year.

21. Considering this proportion against the composition of ethnic minority residents within the District this compares favourably. Whereas the demographic composition of the District consists of approximately 5% of residents from ethnic minority backgrounds, the number of ethnic minority candidates applying to work at the Council is some 3 times higher than is proportionally expected.

22. From this information, the conclusion can be drawn that there exists no discernable negative view of the Council as an employer, amongst applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds that might discourage them from applying to vacancies.

23. However, considering this information alongside the proportion of ethnic minority applicants who are offered employment, the Council compares less favourably. Although 14% of applicants were of ethnic minority origin in 2006/07, only 3% of the total hired came from this group. The Council understands that research needs to be conducted to determine the cause of this disparity, and to form actions to redress this imbalance if it represents unlawful discrimination.

24. In 2005/06 applications for posts from males outnumbered those of females, but this was reversed in the following year. This trend is followed through at the shortlisting and employment offer stage, where women outnumbered men in both years. However, this has not impacted on the number of women actually appointed, and the reasons for this are not clear at present. That said, no issues of concern were raised by applicants about this process.

25. Applications from people with disabilities halved between 2005/06 and 2006/07. At this stage it is not possible to determine whether this is a trend, but will be monitored carefully.

The pay gap between ethnic minority and non-ethnic minority employees, men and women, and staff with/without disabilities

26. The pay gap between employees based upon factors such as race or ethnicity, are often early warning indicators that discrimination may be occurring within an organisation. Where ethnic minority employees are persistently paid less than non-ethnic minority employees, this may identify the existence of barriers to equality of opportunity.

27. The Council has previously set-out its objective to guarantee its commitment to equal pay for equal work, and this commitment has proved successful since 2003 when a job evaluation scheme was introduced for the majority of the workforce. This was extended to the whole workforce in 2004. The Council is proud of its equal pay achievements.

28. Using information recorded for monitoring purposes, the Council has learnt that by 2007, ethnic minority employees were on average more senior and paid better than the general workforce. To illustrate this, the average salary for ethnic minority staff was £25,390 compared with an average of £23,300 for the Council's general workforce.

29. However, not only is there an absence of disadvantage when it comes to salary, but by using the same monitoring data, the Council can also confirm that there exists no discernable employment segregation. Our ethnic minority employees are equally distributed horizontally across different departments and types of work, and also vertically in terms of seniority and income.

30. In these instances, not only does Epping Forest District Council have the most diverse workforce of any district in Essex, but our employees of ethnic minority origin are some of our most skilled staff and diverse in their areas of specialism.

31. With respect to pay differentials between men and women, women on average earn £21,050 per annum compared to £26,790 for men. Women's earnings

are therefore 78.6% of men's. Given the Authority's commitment over the last 5 years to equal pay, this disparity is likely to result from the nature of the work that women occupy in the Authority, and the fact that a significant number work part time in comparison to men. In order to tackle pay inequality the Authority is now running a women's development programme.

32. The differential between disabled and non disabled staff is less marked. Disabled staff earn on average £21,755 compared with £23,735 for staff without a disability, ie. disabled staff earn 91.7% of the earnings of an able bodied employee. Recently two higher earning disabled employees left the authority, which accounts for the disparity.

The proportion of promoted staff from ethnic minority backgrounds, or who are women or disabled

33. In both 2005/06 and 2006/07 the numbers of staff promoted internally was extremely low (1 in 2005/06 and 10 in 2006/07). 60% of internal promotions were of females.

The proportion of ethnic minority/female/disabled staff receiving appraisals in the year

34. Whilst 3.8% of the Council's staff is composed of employees from ethnic minority backgrounds, only 2.1% received a development appraisal of their work and performance in 2006/07. This means that 56% of the Council's ethnic minority employees currently receive their entitlement to an annual review. The Council recognises that this should be improved. However, the experience of ethnic minority employees does not differ significantly from the number of non-ethnic minority employees who have also received an annual review. For example, 58% of female staff received an appraisal, and 62% of disabled staff also.

35. The low proportion of managers conducting annual appraisals of their staffs' training and performance needs is being addressed in the Council's new Performance Development Review framework. All managers have received training to ensure that their staff will receive regular and documented reviews every 12 months.

36. This strategy intends to increase the proportion of staff receiving regular reviews, for both ethnic minority and non-ethnic minority employees, women and men, and disabled/able bodied employees, and also to ensure that no difference between these groups exists in their ability to access performance appraisals.

The proportion of ethnic minority employees, women and staff with disabilities involved in disciplinary action

37. The Council can report that no incidents involving ethnic minority employees resulting in disciplinary action occurred in 2006/07. Equally, no female or disabled staff were subject to disciplinary action.

38. Where disciplinary actions involve higher proportions of ethnic minority employees, this may allude to the existence of negative treatment occurring within the workplace. In addition to genuine cases of disciplinary offences, higher than expected incidences may include institutional discrimination and racism, harassment, or an unsupportive environment.

39. From the low instances of disciplinary action against the Council's staff, we can draw the conclusion that the above examples of institutional discrimination are very unlikely to exist.

Training and staff development

40. The Council recognised early on, that the requirements for equality training represented a corporate training need, and that it was not sufficient to rely on individual staff appraisals or service level plans to take forward this type of training. The Council has therefore made equality and diversity training mandatory for all posts, as the Council seeks to prevent the situation where the lack of such knowledge or skills could lead to instances of unlawful discrimination, or perceived discrimination by ethnic minority staff and service users.

41. This approach was welcomed by service managers, who indicated their support for an enhanced programme of equality training during the Council's first cycle of impact assessments in 2004. Resources for this training have been successfully allocated and training has been completed by the vast majority of staff, tailored according to seniority within the organisation and across a wide array of specialised job functions.

42. Monitoring data on this training is collected via the number of applications for training, turnout and through individual satisfaction appraisals of the course content, which includes an equal opportunities questionnaire for all attendees. This information is held digitally by the Human Resources unit.

43. In addition to mandatory equality training, courses designed to address general management and staffing issues are also mindful of equality and diversity issues. Examples of two courses in which this approach is evident is in training relating to Managing Absence and Workplace Harassment and Bullying. In all courses, as with these examples, the Council's Learning and Development Advisor ensures linkages of this nature through the procurement of bespoke EFDC-focused training, whose content can be adapted to forward the Council's equality objectives, rather than purchasing 'off the shelf' solutions.

Training applications and take-up amongst ethnic minority employees

44. 63% of staff from ethnic minority backgrounds took-up training in 2006/07. This compares with 74% of female employees, 100% of male employees and 43% of disabled staff. All staff have access to training and development opportunities via the Corporate Training Programme and the PDR process. The reasons for the disparity in training take up amongst ethnic minority, female and disabled staff are not known. However, as noted above take up of PDRs is lower than it should be. To combat this new training on the PDR process has taken place for all managers, and as a result it is expected that the take up rate will increase substantially over the next twelve months.

b) Housing Directorate Monitoring – 2006/07

Housing applicants and new applicants housed

45. All people applying to join the Council's Housing Register are asked to complete a housing application form. The form is also used for homelessness applications. The application form includes questions on ethnic origin. A report is produced annually for the Housing Scrutiny Panel showing a breakdown of the

ethnicity of applicants, both for sheltered and general needs housing. The form also includes questions on gender, disability and age. The responses to these questions are not reported to members but are used to assess the accommodation needs of the applicant's household.

46. The report to the Scrutiny Panel also gives a breakdown of the ethnicity of applicants that have been housed, both for sheltered and general needs housing. The report compares the ethnicity of housing applicants with new tenants housed (i.e. any mismatch between the ethnicity of applicants and those housed).

Table 10: The breakdown of the ethnic origin of applicants on the Housing Register at 31/03/07:

Ethnic Group	Percentage (%)
White British/Irish	78.3
Bangladeshi/Pakistani/Indian	0.8
African/Caribbean	2.0
Mixed Race	0.5
Other	2.8
Not Stated	15.6

Table 11: The breakdown of the ethnic origin of Housing Register applicants allocated Council accommodation during 2006/2007:

Ethnic Group	Percentage (%)
White British/Irish	75.3
Bangladeshi/Pakistani/Indian	0.4
African/Caribbean	1.3
Mixed Race	0.7
Other	2.2
Not Stated	20.10

Table 12: The breakdown of the ethnic origin of applicants on the Housing Register awaiting sheltered accommodation at 31/03/07:

Ethnic Group	Percentage (%)
White British/Irish	75.9
Bangladeshi/Pakistani/Indian	0.8
African/Caribbean	0
Mixed Race	0
Other	0.9
Not Stated	22.4

Table 13: The breakdown of the ethnic origin of Housing Register applicants allocated sheltered accommodation during 2006/2007:

Ethnic Group	Percentage (%)
White British/Irish	61.3
Bangladeshi/Pakistani/Indian	0.4
African/Caribbean	1.3
Mixed Race	0.7
Other	2.2
Not Stated	38.7

Existing tenants

47. The Housing Management system (Anite) includes records of all tenants. The gender of tenants is known but the system does not currently include data on ethnicity or disabilities for all tenants. Around half of the Council's tenants (over 3,000) completed a survey form in 2007 asking a range of questions including details of ethnicity, faith, languages spoken and disabilities. This information will be loaded onto the Anite system. It can then be used to profile the customer base, for strategic purposes, and for monitoring any special client needs.

Tenant satisfaction survey

48. A survey of around 1,000 council tenants is conducted by a consultant every three years, using the National Housing Federation's 'STATUS' methodology. The results currently inform two BVPIs. Tenants are asked to rate their satisfaction with the overall service provided by Housing, and on specific services such as repairs and housing management. Questions on ethnicity form part of the survey. The survey results are reported to members and to the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation.

49. In 2007, the Council carried out one of its largest user satisfaction surveys. Through consulting users on all public-facing service areas and receiving thousands of responses, this exercise has provided the Council with a great wealth of information that will assist in identifying priority areas to direct our future Race Equality Scheme.

50. One such area of interest concerns the satisfaction of ethnic minority tenants with the service provided by the Council. According to the Council's satisfaction survey, overall satisfaction with housing services amongst ethnic minority tenants was at 81.3% (unweighted) compared to 86.3% (unweighted) for non-ethnic minority households. While this small gap suggests that improvement opportunities are available with regards to increasing the equality of perceived outcomes, the results represent general equality when the potential margin for error is factored in.

Satisfaction with participation according to ethnic minority tenants (BV75b)

51. The results of the satisfaction surveys conducted in 2007 also confirm that general equality exists with regards to encouraging tenants' participation in the decision-making process. Amongst ethnic minority tenants, 61.5% (unweighted) were satisfied or very satisfied with services provided to aid their participation, compared with 64.9% (unweighted) who were from non-ethnic minority backgrounds. This result satisfies the aim of providing equal perceived outcomes amongst all elements of the Council's tenants when the potential margin for error is factored in. However, the small gap between satisfaction outcomes will not be taken for granted and improvement opportunities will be sought to eliminate any difference on grounds of race or ethnicity determining outcomes.

52. In both cases of overall satisfaction with housing services (BV74b) and satisfaction with participation (BV75b) amongst ethnic minority tenants, the responses illustrate that no significant difference exists between the satisfaction between ethnicity. The Council will therefore attempt to increase satisfaction through its current improvement plans, while at the same time monitoring their affect on the perceptions of ethnic minority tenants.

Table 14: Best Value Performance Indicator 74 - satisfaction of tenants with the overall service provided by their landlord (weighted data):

	Percentage 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied (%)	Base number of respondents
All households	85.1	988
BME Households	78.7	16
Non-BME Households	85.0	960

Table 15: Best Value Performance Indicator 75 - satisfaction of tenants with opportunities for participation in management and decision making in relation to housing services provided by their landlord (weighted data):

	Percentage 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied (%)	Base number of respondents
All households	63.2	751
BME Households	55.8	13
Non-BME Households	62.8	720

Housing Repairs and Housing Assets

53. Council tenants who have requested repairs to their properties are sent confirmation notices. The notice includes a satisfaction survey, to be returned when the repair is completed. Satisfaction forms are also sent to tenants when major works have been carried out such as external painting or gas maintenance. These surveys include ethnic origin questions. The responses on ethnicity are reviewed within Housing but are not reported further.

Careline service users and sheltered housing residents

54. New clients are asked to complete a satisfaction form which includes ethnicity and faith monitoring. The responses on ethnicity are reviewed within Housing but not reported further.

House sales and leasehold services

55. Tenants who have purchased a council property are asked to complete a satisfaction form which includes ethnicity, faith, age and disability monitoring. The responses on ethnicity and disability are reviewed within Housing but are not reported further.

Ad Hoc Surveys

56. Housing has conducted a number of other surveys in recent years, on an ad hoc basis, to inform service reviews and proposed improvements. Examples are exit surveys and other client surveys. Such surveys including questions on ethnicity and disabilities (where appropriate) and the responses are considered as part of the overall review.

c) User Satisfaction Surveys

57. Every three years the Council is required by the Department for Communities and Local Government to carry out User Satisfaction Surveys in the following areas:

- General Satisfaction
- Planning
- Benefits
- Housing (this is described in section b above)

58. The last surveys took place in 2006, and prior to that in 2003. A further survey was conducted in 2007 and results are awaited.

59. In all surveys the organisation carrying out the research is required to ensure that a representative sample of residents is surveyed, taking into account the demographic nature of the District. The aim of this is to ensure that the information provided reflects, as far as is practicable, all groups resident in the District, as defined by gender, age, housing tenure, disability, ethnicity and number of adults in the accommodation. Unfortunately the responses received are not analysed in a way which can identify whether any particular group of residents has specific concerns which are not shared in the same way by others. That said, the surveys provide useful information about how the Council performs across a range of indicators that have equalities implications. These are now considered for each survey in turn.

The General Survey

60. This survey considers a range of 'quality of life' indicators relating to:

- The way the Authority runs things
- Complaints Handling
- Waste Collection
- Cultural and Recreational Services

The Planning Survey

61. This survey measures respondents' level of satisfaction with the service provided by the Council in processing their planning application. Unlike the General Survey, it measures the satisfaction of actual customers of the Council who have received a defined service: in the General Survey some respondents may not have received some of the services they were asked about.

The Benefits Survey

62. This survey measures the satisfaction of benefit claimants with the service provided by the Benefits Office. As with the Planning Survey it measures the satisfaction of those who have used the service.

d) Performance Indicator Monitoring Information

Performance indicators and improvement between 2005-2007

63. Performance indicators are government defined and audited measures that the Council is required to calculate and publish each year. These enable the Council to monitor its progress over time on a wide range of issues within the District. That said, the set of indicators changed substantially in 2008, but in order to ensure continuity of monitoring information many continue to be collected locally.

64. In our first Race Equality Scheme, we identified a number of performance indicators that we would monitor in order to give direction on policies whose objective

was to promote equality of opportunity for ethnic minority customers and service users. Many of these indicators are also applicable to monitoring with respect to disability and gender issues. These indicators were identified because they measure delivery outcomes and improvement in a number of key areas:

- The Council's compliance with the Equality Standard for local government
- The Council's duty to promote equality
- The Proportion of ethnic minorities/women in senior management
- The ethnic/gender composition of the workforce
- Satisfaction with the Council as a landlord
- The Council's compliance with the Code of Practice for social landlords
- The number of racially-motivated incidents of crime recorded
- The percentage of racially-motivated incidents resulting in further action

65. Since the implementation of the Council's Race Equality Scheme, we have witnessed an improvement in many of these areas when responding to the needs of our staff and service users. Details of this now follow.

Compliance with the Equality Standard for local government (BV2a)

66. The Equality Standard for local government, which is split into 6 ascending levels of achievement, provides a framework for establishing a joined-up corporate and Directorate-level strategy to improve equality of opportunity for potentially disadvantaged groups.

67. Within the life-cycle of the Council's first Race Equality Scheme, between 2005 and 2008, the Council has improved from Level 1 to Level 2. To achieve continuing improvement, the Council has developed a single Corporate Equalities Action Plan covering race, gender and disability equality. This Plan aims to pull together all the equality objectives that have been developed over recent years, into a single codified document and provide a clear timetable for action.

The duty to promote race equality (BV2b)

68. As a national performance indicator, the Council is annually assessed against a number of key criteria that must be accomplished in order to demonstrate that race equality is being effectively promoted in our community. These criteria include improving staff perceptions of equal opportunities within the workplace, improving satisfaction rates and service outcomes amongst ethnic minority service users and ensuring that services adequately meet the needs of minority ethnic groups.

69. Since first implementing our Race Equality Scheme in 2005, the Council has improved substantially in relation to the above criteria. At the end of 2007, the Council has achieved 89% of criteria that demonstrate our duty to promote race equality. This is a 42% increase from 2005, and our aim is to continue this improving trend in future.

The percentage of top 5% of earners who are women (BV11a)

70. One of the roles of the employment duty is to assist the Council in monitoring and remedying inequality within the workplace. It identifies key areas that we must observe, and where an authority responds to an apparent employment gap successfully, the outcome is a more equal equalities profile amongst its staff at all levels of seniority. This is our aim.

71. With respect to the proportion of staff in senior management positions who are women, our performance over the last year has been between 23.45% and 24.81%. National top quartile performance (District Councils) is 31.25%. Although on face value this seems to be a significant disparity, in reality if the Council had an additional 4 female staff in the top 5% pay bracket it would be likely to achieve top quartile performance. The restructuring of the Council may provide the opportunity to achieve this.

72. Notwithstanding this, the Council is aware that it would be desirable to have an even split of women and men at the top level of the organisation. To this end, a range of development activities have been launched to enhance confidence and skills in women and men.

The percentage of top 5% of earners from black and ethnic minority groups (BV11b)

73. With regards to an equitable ethnic profile across the hierarchy of the Council's employment structure, the Council has two ways of measuring these outcomes. The first method is via evaluating the number of ethnic minority employees in senior management. This is measured using the top 5% of earners bracket (BV11b), as salary and seniority are commensurate in the Council.

74. Through measuring the top 5% of earners from ethnic minority groups, the Council has the ability to monitor the representativeness of senior management. As a measurement, it enables us to ensure that the diversity of senior management is proportionally comparable with that of all staff. This acts as an early warning indicator to identify the presence of barriers to equal opportunity and career mobility.

76. In this regard, the Council has performed well in meeting its objective to ensure that the workforce is vertically representative. Council-wide, 3% of staff are from minority ethnic backgrounds, which is the same proportion of ethnic minority employees within senior management.

77. From this outcome, two conclusions can be drawn. The first is that the Council's senior management is proportionally representative of the general workforce. The second is that in terms of career mobility, the outcome of this proportional representation indicates that the Council's policy of awarding career progression based upon merit has no significant negative impact on ethnic minority employees' career opportunities.

The percentage of top 5% of earners with a disability (BV11c)

78. The Authority's performance has consistently been at or near district council top quartile (5.91%) over the last year, with quarter 3 performance for 2007/08 being 5.47%. Performance has fallen over the last year due to a number of senior managers with disabilities leaving the Authority, either to take up jobs elsewhere, retirement or on grounds of ill health. This will be kept under review.

The percentage of employees with a disability (BV16a)

The percentage of economically active people who have a disability (BV16b)

79. Top quartile performance for 2005/06 (date of latest audited figures available) was 4.37%, and the Authority's performance at quarter 3 of 2007/08 was 7.68%,

which shows a significant representation compared with other authorities. However, the percentage of economically active people in the District who have a disability is 11.35%, indicating that the Authority is only 68% representative of the community in its employment of people with disabilities.

Ethnic minority representation in the workforce – employees (BV17a) and Ethnic minority representation in the workforce – local population (BV17b)

80. Another key method of evaluating outcomes of our implementation of the employment duty comes from how representative the ethnic profile of staff is compared with the District population as a whole (BV17a & b). It is important that if we are to serve the District as a local authority, that the staff tasked with this responsibility are representative of the local community.

81. Since the Race Equality Scheme was introduced in 2005, there has been consistent improvement with regards to creating a workforce that is more representative of the District's population. Over this period, the percentage of economically active ethnic minority persons in the local population has remained at approximately 5%, whereas the proportion of persons from minority ethnic backgrounds working for the Council has risen from 2.6% in 2005 to 3.8% in 2007. This is significantly higher than the District top-quartile, placing Epping Forest District Council 38th out of the 240 District councils in the country, and first in Essex, for having the most diverse workforce.

82. These results demonstrate the outcome that as an employer, the Council's efforts have improved the ethnic diversity of our workforce, in line with our aim of developing a workforce that better reflects the communities we serve. For instance, whereas in 2005 the Council was only 55% representative of the Community in terms of the diversity of our workforce, due to the commitment made to remedy this inequality, the proportion of ethnic employees was 76% representative of the Community's ethnic profile in 2007. The Council recognises both the achievements that have been made and that greater improvement should still be sought to achieve full representation. We are committed to exploring new opportunities to do this through our policies and actions.

Overall satisfaction with housing services according to ethnic minority tenants (BV74b)

83. The outcomes from this survey are considered above in Section b above 'Housing Directorate Monitoring'.

Compliance with the Commission for Racial Equality's Code of Practice for social landlords (BV164)

84. The Commission for Race Equality's Code of Practice for social landlords requires the Council to demonstrate how we have met certain criteria designed to avoid potential harassment and discrimination within our renting practices.

85. Since the implementation of the Race Equality Scheme, the Council has consistently met these criteria for each year between 2005 and 2007.

Racially-motivated incidents recorded (BV174)

86. In 2006, the number of racial incidents reported dropped sharply to 105.06 per 100,000 population from 144.76 the previous year. While in performance terms,

this fall is seen by the Department of Communities and Local Government as a significant performance improvement, in the interests of our commitment to equality, we remain concerned as to whether such a sharp decline is due to a genuine decline in racially motivated incidents, or whether there has been a decline in the levels of reporting amongst our ethnic minority communities.

87. The Council and Essex Police have therefore taken the challenging long-term strategy of seeking to increase confidence amongst our ethnic minority communities to report racially motivated incidents. This strategy is likely to increase the numbers of racially motivated incidents reported on paper, but this is aimed at gaining a true picture of crime and not ignoring it for the benefit of performance figures.

88. The Council recognises that there exist conflicting levels of crime published via Police records versus the British Crime Survey respectively, which imply that the number of incidents reported may not be commensurate with the number of incidents that actually occur or are reported to the Police and Council. It is therefore our intention to ensure that greater numbers of incidents are reported using less inhibiting methods such as the Epping Forest Hate Crime website, where incidents can be reported online. The objective of encouraging more, not fewer, reports is in order to assess a more accurate picture of racially-motivated crime and to form a real-world strategy to sustainably reduce this. To support this, each Directorate has a 'Hate Crime' representative who is responsible for dealing with such incidents.

Racial incidents resulting in further action (BV175)

89. Performance with regard to this indicator has consistently been at the optimum level. Since the adoption of the Race Equality Scheme, the Council and Essex Police have made the commitment to guarantee that 100% of all racial incidents result in further action.

90. At present, all reports of racial incidents are forwarded to the Hate Crime Panel, chaired by the Council, where each incident is recorded and minuted. All incidents within the District are reported to the Police or the District Council and raised for discussion at the next meeting of the Panel. Where time between the original reporting of the incident and the next available meeting is relatively long, a report of what action has been taken between the last meeting and the original time of reporting is also supplied.

e) Information gained from the 2006 Staff Survey

91. The 2006 Staff Survey sought views from staff about a range of matters relating to their employment and working conditions. A discrete section was included on equality and diversity (five questions), and also on harassment.

92. 90% of respondents said they had not witnessed or experienced any unfair discrimination in relation to service delivery, and 75% said they had not witnessed or experienced any employment discrimination. Of those who said that they had witnessed or experienced discrimination, or may have done, higher percentages of black and minority ethnic staff, and disabled respondents (30% and 18% respectively*) felt they had personally witnessed or experienced employment discrimination, compared with 13% from all respondents. (*Note: the numbers of BME and disabled staff responding in the affirmative to this question were small).

93. Turning to harassment, 60% of respondents said they knew about the Council's policies and procedures for dealing with harassment and bullying. The rest

were unsure or did not know. 25% of all respondents said they had personally experienced or witnessed harassment, bullying, violence or aggression at work during the last year. Much of this related to inappropriate behaviour from the public, which the Council has addressed through the introduction of a 'Violence at Work' policy.

94. 16% of all respondents said they felt harassed and the same number said that someone else had been harassed. There were higher rates amongst BME and disabled staff. There was less difference on grounds of gender, although more women experienced harassment than men. In ranking the extent of harassment suffered, BME staff experienced 'a lot' of harassment, women and disabled staff experienced 'some' harassment. The most prevalent source of harassment was managers, followed by members of the public, other employees and elected members (in descending order).

95. The issues raised here are being addressed by an action plan agreed by Management Board and the Joint Consultative Committee. In addition, a policy on Violence and Aggression at Work has been introduced, along with a course on Managing Challenging Behaviour. A new Harassment and Bullying Policy is being drafted.

Section 4 – Conclusions

96. A significant amount of equality monitoring is taking place across the Council, together with supporting actions to tackle identified inequality. In 2007 a new policy for equality monitoring was agreed by Management Board, which set a corporate framework for this activity. Directorates are now considering which new areas should be monitored and proposals will be developed to ensure that issues relating to adverse impact can be better identified.

97. Whilst much progress has been made, it is recognised that this work needs to extend further, and indeed the Council has prioritised resources for equality and diversity over the last two years in recognition of this, and continues to do so. A further report will be made in one year's time, detailing actions taken and progress.

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A District of Diversity

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Notes

The following maps and analyses have been constructed using information derived from the Office of National Statistics' Census 2001, unless otherwise stated. Where more recent information is available, it has been used and its source noted.

The Super Output Areas (SOAs) used in this briefing contain a minimum population area of 1000 people, but tend to average out at 1500 people wide. As a boundary standard, the use of SOAs in this briefing greatly improves the resolution of demographic data over ward level information.

In each map, the SOA outlined in the yellow border is the area in which the Civic Offices are located, as a consistent point of reference.

Results may not sum due to rounding.

Ethnic Group Demographics

1) White or White British

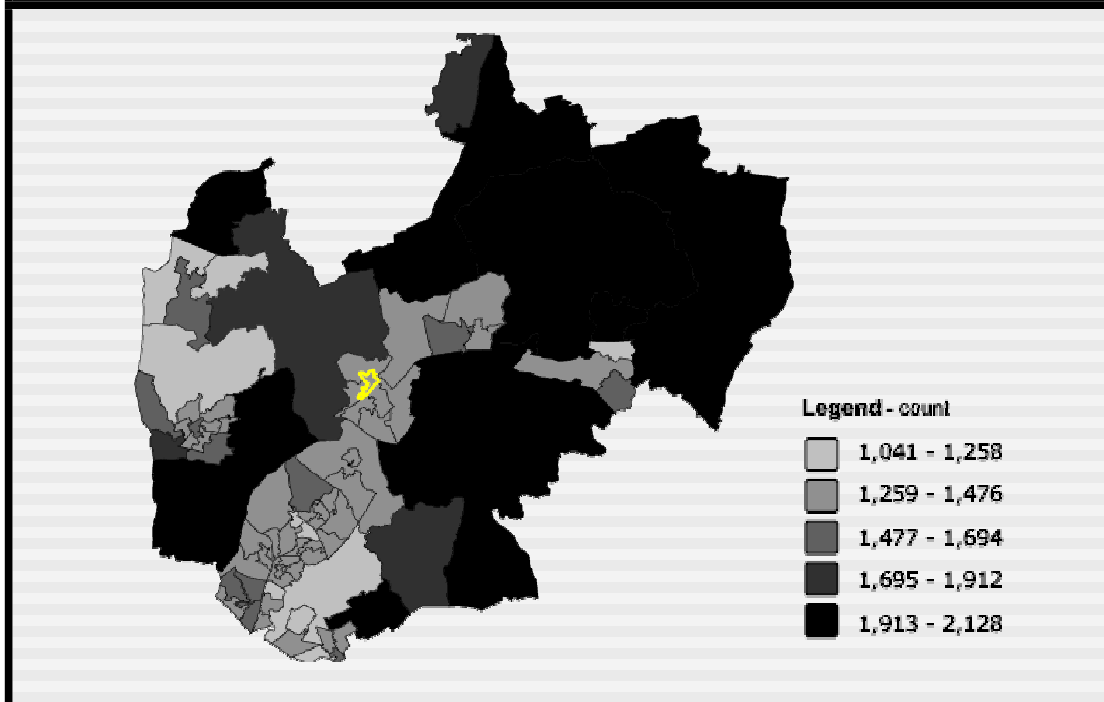
The 'White or White British' ethnic group is the most populous group within the District, accounting for 95.1% of the total District population.

Within this ethnic group there exists 3 sub-groups:

- **White British** (95.9% of the total White population);
- **White Other** (2.8% of the total White population), and;
- **White Irish** (1.2% of the total White population).

The White population is evenly distributed throughout the District, which is not intuitively indicated by *figure 1.1*. Due to the variety of population and geographic sizes of SOAs within the District, the map should not be taken as illustrating a dimension of concentration within a particular area. Its purpose in this case is to indicate the total population count of those of a particular ethnic group within a SOA.

Figure 1.1 – Super Output Area concentration



Ethnic Group Demographics

2) Asian or Asian British

The 'Asian or Asian British' ethnic group is the second most populous group within the District, accounting for 2.4% of the total District population.

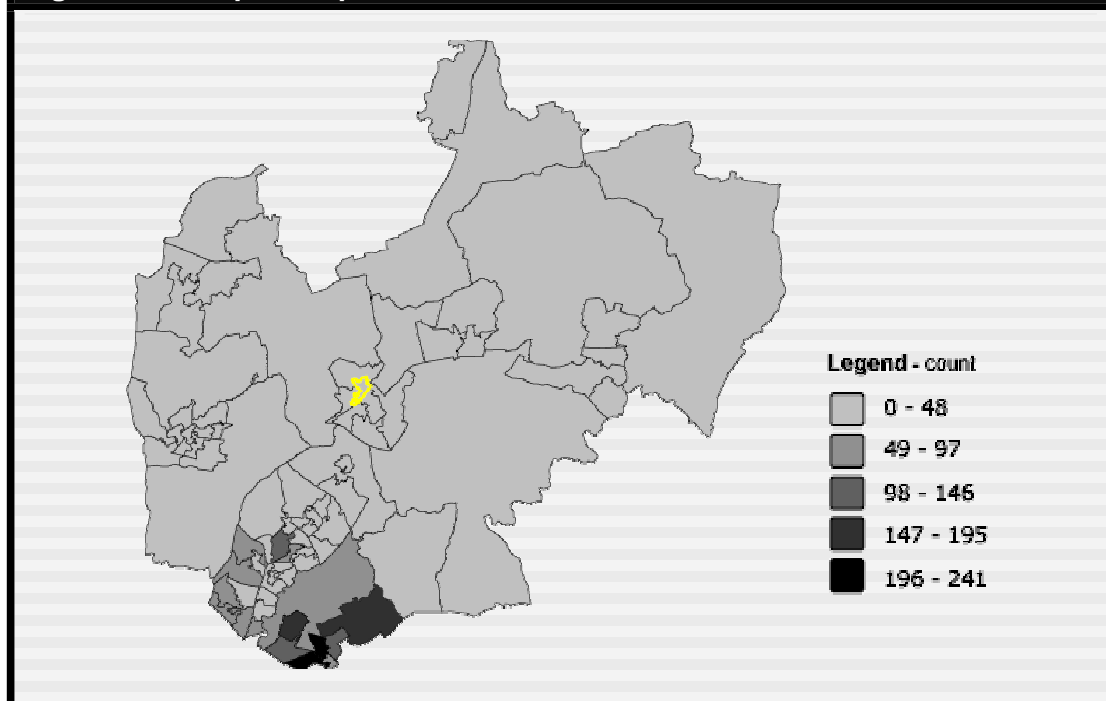
Within this ethnic group there exists 4 sub-groups:

- **Asian Indian** (69.3% of the total Asian population);
- **Asian Pakistani** (15.9% of the total Asian population);
- **Asian Other** (12% of the total Asian population), and;
- **Asian Bangladeshi** (2.8% of the total Asian population).

There is a distinctive concentration of the Asian population in the south of the District, with high concentrations when compared with the District average of 2.4% These area include:

- **Grange Hill Ward** (10.5% of the total ward population);
- **Chigwell Row Ward** (8.7% of the total ward population);
- **Chigwell Village Ward** (8.2% of the total ward population);
- **Loughton St Mary's Ward** (5.1% of the total ward population);
- **Buckhurst Hill West Ward** (4.6% of the total ward population);
- **Loughton Forest Ward** (4.3% of the total ward population), and;
- **Buckhurst Hill East Ward** (3.1% of the total ward population).

Figure 2.1 – Super Output Area concentration



Ethnic Group Demographics

3) Mixed Origin

The 'Mixed Origin' ethnic group is the third most populous group within the District, accounting for 1.0% of the total District population.

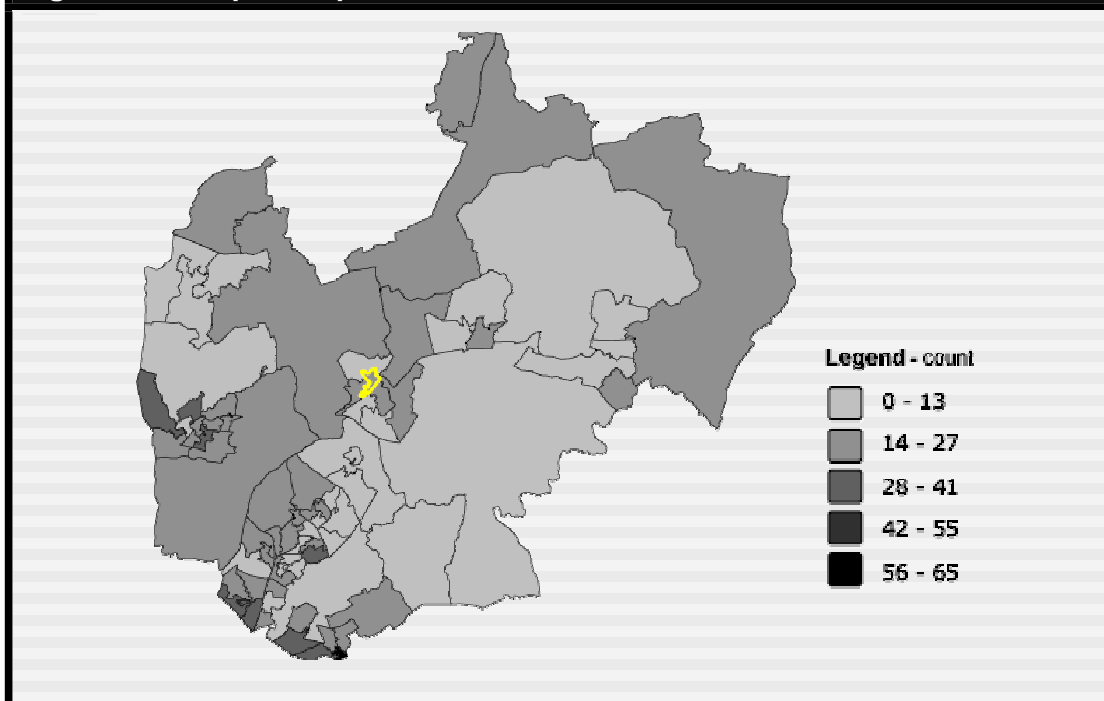
Within this ethnic group there exists 4 sub-groups:

- **Mixed: White and Black Caribbean** (35.1% of the total Mixed population);
- **Mixed: White and Asian** (34.5% of the total Mixed population);
- **Mixed: Other mixed** (22.9% of the total Mixed population);
- **Mixed: White and Black African** (7.5% of the total Mixed population).

The District's Mixed population is more widely dispersed, making a large proportion of this population potentially hard to reach. There is however, a distinctive concentration of the Mixed population in the District's urban areas, when compared with the Mixed District average population share of 1.0%. These areas include:

- **Grange Hill Ward** (2.1% of the total ward population);
- **Waltham Abbey North East** (1.8% of the total ward population);
- **Loughton St Mary's** (1.7% of the total ward population);
- **Buckhurst Hill West Ward** (1.4% of the total ward population), and;
- **Waltham Abbey South West** (1.4% of the total ward population).

Figure 3.1 – Super Output Area concentration



Ethnic Group Demographics

4) Black or Black British

The 'Black or Black British' ethnic group is the fourth most populous group within the District, accounting for 0.8% of the total District population.

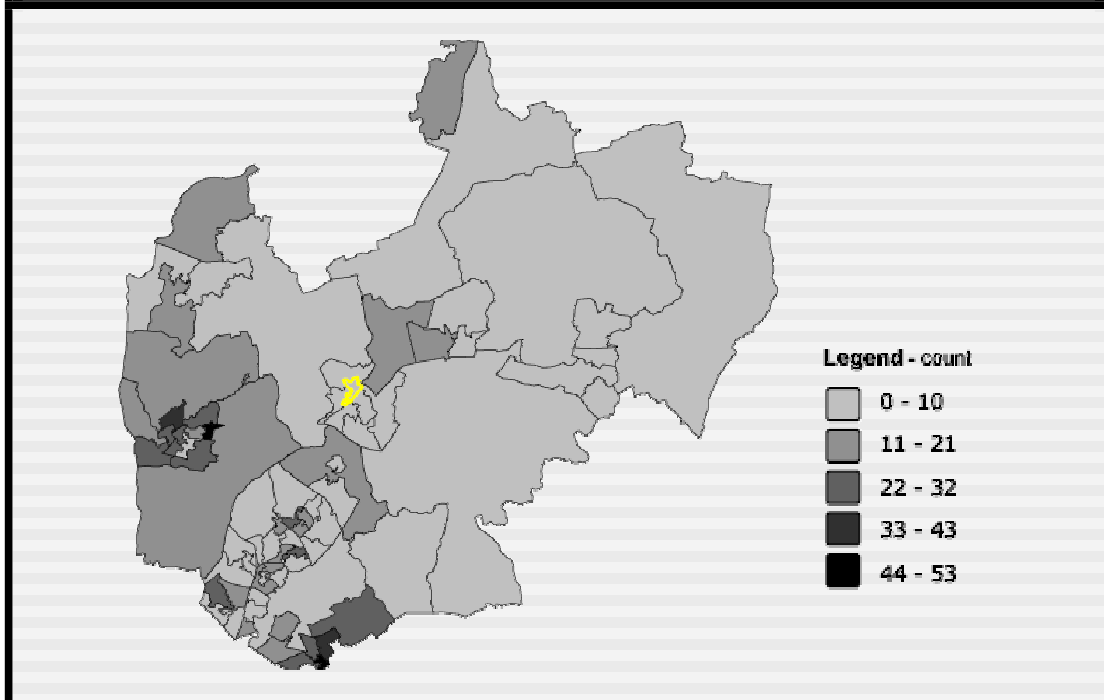
Within this ethnic group there exists 3 sub-groups:

- **Black or Black British: Caribbean** (50.5% of the total Black population);
- **Black or Black British: African** (43.4% of the total Black population);
- **Black or Black British: Other** (6.1% of the total Black population).

There is a distinctive concentration of the Black population in the District's urban areas with high concentrations when compared with the District average of 0.8% These area include:

- **Grange Hill Ward** (2.4% of the total ward population);
- **Waltham Abbey Paternoster** (2.1% of the total ward population);
- **Waltham Abbey North East** (1.8% of the total ward population);
- **Waltham Abbey Honey Lane** (1.5% of the total ward population);
- **Waltham Abbey South West** (1.3% of the total ward population);
- **Chigwell Row Ward** (1.2% of the total ward population);
- **Loughton Fairmead** (1.2% of the total ward population), and;
- **Loughton Alderton** (1.0% of the total ward population).

Figure 4.1 – Super Output Area concentration



Ethnic Group Demographics

5) Chinese and Other

The 'Chinese and Other' ethnic group is the fifth most populous group within the District, accounting for 0.6% of the total District population.

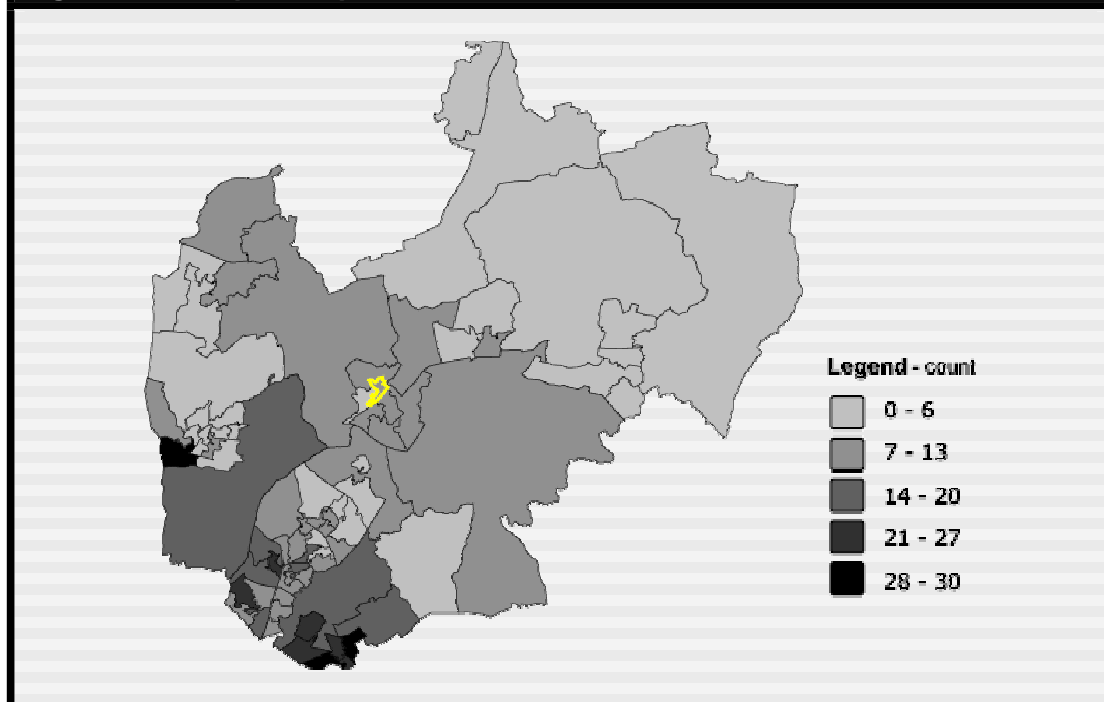
Within this ethnic group there exists 2 sub-groups:

- **Chinese** (63.7% of the total Chinese or Other population), and;
- **Other** (36.3% of the total Chinese or Other population).

There is a distinctive concentration of the Chinese and Other ethnic populations in the District's urban areas with high concentrations when compared with the District average of 0.6%. These area include:

- **Grange Hill Ward** (1.6% of the total ward population);
- **Loughton Forest Ward** (1.3% of the total ward population);
- **Waltham Abbey South West Ward** (1.2% of the total ward population);
- **Buckhurst Hill East Ward** (0.9% of the total ward population).

Figure 5.1 – Super Output Area concentration



Gender Demographics

6) Male and Female population

The District's gender split currently stands at 51.5% female and 48.5% male. However, there are several areas in which the female population is higher in concentration than the District average, which is often attributed to larger numbers of single elderly women. These areas include:

- **Loughton Broadway Ward** (53.4% female / 46.6% male within the ward);
- **Loughton Alderton Ward** (52.4% female / 47.6% male within the ward);
- **Epping Hemnall Ward** (52.2% female / 47.8% male within the ward).

Figure 6.1 – Male Super Output Area concentration

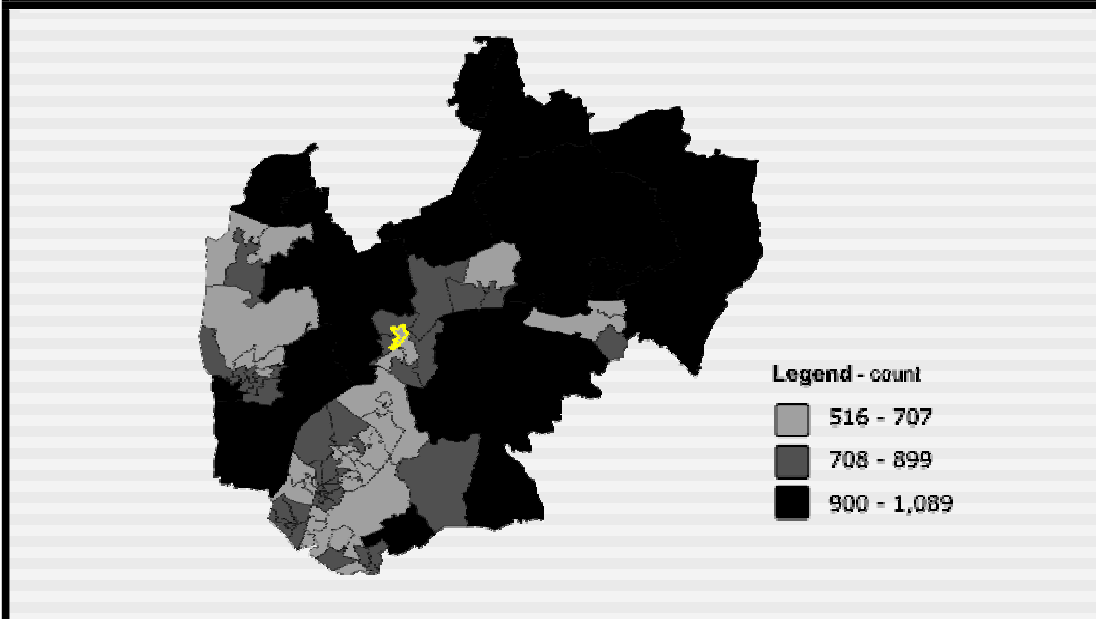
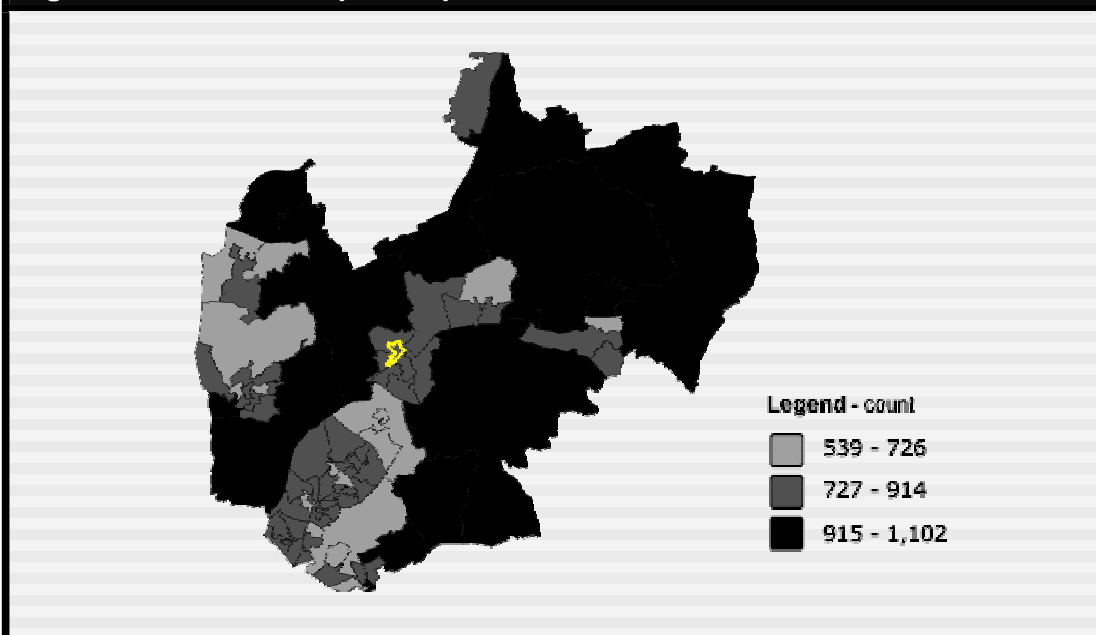


Figure 6.2 – Female Super Output Area concentration



Disability Demographics

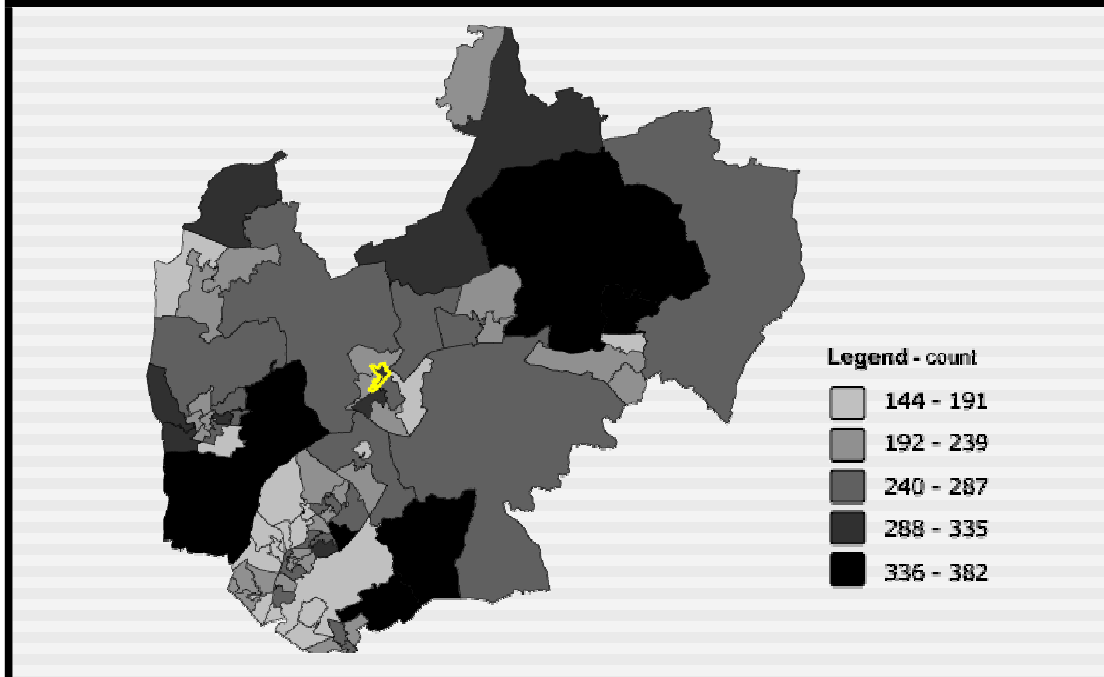
7) Limiting long-term illness

Limiting long-term illness has been used as a proxy indicator to identify disability within the District. While the definitions of illness and disability do not conform, using limiting long-term illness is should therefore be taken as a standard substitute for disability, where Census information is limited.

There is a distinctive concentration of populations with limiting long-term illnesses in the District's sub-urban areas when compared with the District average of 15.5%. These area include:

- **Lambourne Ward** (19.5% of the total ward population);
- **Shelley Ward** (19.9% of the total ward population);
- **Chigwell Row Ward** (17.5% of the total ward population), and;
- **Waltham Abbey High Beach** (16.8% of the total ward population);

Figure 6.1 – Limiting long-term illness Super Output Area concentration



LIST OF PRIORISED SERVICES FOR IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Council assessed the services listed below as relevant to fulfilling the general duty for its first Race Equality Scheme in 2005, prioritising them as high, medium or low priority. Although corporate restructuring has taken place since that time, the services remain relevant.

High Priority

Leisure Management
Human Resources Unit
Cultural Services
Forward Planning and Environment
Development Control
Environmental Control and Environmental Commercial
Housing Development Strategy and Information
Housing Need
Policy Section (including Grant Aid)
Strategic Management
Revenues
Works Unit

Medium Priority

Performance Management Unit
Planned and Special Maintenance
Public Relations
Housing Management and Repairs
Housing and Council Tax Benefits
Highways
Estate Management
Building Control
Elderly Housing Services
Democratic and Member Services
Information Technology, including telecommunications

Low Priority

Legal Services / Local Land Charges
Emergency Planning

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Impact Assessments completed as at March 2008

The following services have been determined as relevant to the promotion of race equality, and all impact assessments have been completed on them.

Corporate Support Services

Policy	Date Assessed	Date due for Re-assessment
Flexitime	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Job Share	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Maternity	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Paternity	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Flexible Working	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Pay Protection Policy	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Job Evaluation	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Job Evaluation Maintenance	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Annual Leave	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Annual Leave for part time staff	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Working Time Regulations	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Equal Opportunities	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Equal Opportunities in employment policy	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Redundancy and redeployment	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
SDR process	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Not required – see PDR process.
Corporate training and development policy	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Professional Education Scheme	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Recruitment and selection including preventing illegal working	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Dress code	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Harassment and bullying policy	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Grievance procedure	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Disciplinary/Capability procedure	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010

	07	
Staff Appeals Panel procedure	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Alcohol and substance misuse policy	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Managing Absence Policy	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Stress Policy	14/6/04 & Oct 07	Oct 2010
Staff Handbook	October 2004 & Oct 07	October 2010
Homeworking	May 2005	May 2008
Employee Wellbeing Statement	August 2007	August 2010
PDR process	October 2007	October 2010
Staff Code of Conduct, including the following policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Duties • The Extended Holiday Scheme • Scheme of Adoption Leave • Close Personal Relationships at work • Secondments Policy • Smoking Policy • Severance Policy • Induction Process 	October 2007	October 2010
Violence at work policy	October 2007	October 2010
Work Experience policy	October 2007	October 2010
Child Protection policy	October 2007	October 2010
Age Discrimination – working beyond age 65, and Redundancy/Early retirement	Oct 2007	October 2010
New recruitment advertising contract for temporary and permanent staff	Nov 2007	Nov 2010
Xmas closure 2008-12	Nov 2007	Nov 2010
Emergency Planning and Administrative Services	5/12/05	December 2008
Valuation and Estate Management	5/12/05	December 2008
Legal Services and Land Charges	8/11/05	November 2008

Deputy Chief Executive

Policy	Date assessed	Date due for re-assessment
Community and culture: Sports Development Community Leisure	14/9/05	September 2008
Epping Forest Arts	16/9/05	September 2008
Playing Pitch Strategy	Nov 2007	Nov 2010
Youth Council	Nov 2007	Nov 2010
Compliments and complaints	29/11/05	November 2008

Performance Management Unit	28/10/05	October 2008
PR and Information	1/11/05	November 2008

Finance

Policy	Date assessed	Date due for re-assessment
Revenues	16/9/05	September 2008
Benefits	5/10/05	October 2008
Concessionary Fares	October 2007	October 2010
Procurement Strategy	October 2007	October 2010
Budget process and strategy 2007/08	October 2007	Annually
Capital strategy and programme	October 2007	Annually
Medium Term Financial Strategy	October 2007	Annually

Environmental Services

Policy	Date assessed	Date due for re-assessment
Waste Management	25/11/05	November 2008
Car Parking, Street Naming, Street Furniture	29/11/05	November 2008
Engineering Services	5/12/05	December 2008
Environmental Health	12/10/05	October 2008

Planning

Policy	Date assessed	Date due for re-assessment
Development Control	11/10/05	October 2008
Building Control	25/11/05	November 2008
Planning and Economic Development	21/10/05	October 2008
Forward Planning and Conservation	Autumn 2004	Autumn 2007

Housing

Policy	Date assessed	Date due for re-assessment
Housing allocations scheme	16/3/06	March 2009
Housing information and tenant participation	12/10/05	October 2008

Housing maintenance and repairs	3/10/05	October 2008
Housing Management	21/10/05	October 2008
Housing Development and strategy	27/9/05	September 2008
Older people's services	5/10/05	October 2008
Home Ownership Grants	Jan 2008	Jan 2011

Works Unit

Policy	Date assessed	Date due for re-assessment
Building maintenance, vehicle maintenance (including MOTs)	14/9/05	September 2008

Assistant to Chief Executive

Policy	Date assessed	Date due for re-assessment
Research and Democratic Services	27/9/05	September 2008
Projects and Partnerships	Autumn 2004 Reviewed Jan 2008	Autumn 2007 Next review Jan 2011

Epping Forest District Council

Equality Monitoring Policy and Guidance

1. Introduction

Monitoring ethnicity, gender, disability and age is now commonplace in Local Government, both in terms of employment and service delivery. Indeed the statutory duties placed on the Council in terms of race, gender and disability require the monitoring of services for adverse impact on individuals and groups within the various equality schemes.

The purpose of this document is to set out how the Council complies with its statutory duties, ensuring a common approach across all Directorates.

2. Policy statement

Epping Forest District Council is committed to equality of opportunity in service provision and employment, and that all service users and customers receive fair and equitable treatment.

To help us deliver fair and effective service delivery and employment procedures, and to develop future policies and procedures we ask service users and customers to complete equalities monitoring information. There is no obligation on anyone to provide this information, but we encourage people to do so. If an individual chooses not to provide this information it will not have any adverse effect on the services they are entitled to receive from the Council.

The information provided by service users and customers is treated in the strictest confidence and will not be used for any purpose other than service monitoring. All information provided will be used in a way that no individual can be identified. Names and addresses will not be used in the collation of this data.

Information provided by service users and customers will be provided on the basis of how they describe themselves in terms of ethnic origin, disability and gender.

3. The definition of equality monitoring

Equality monitoring is the process of collecting, storing and analysing data about people's ethnic backgrounds, gender and disabilities. The purpose of this activity is to identify any adverse impact of our policies and functions on individuals or groups, and to use this information to take action to rectify the adverse impact.

4. Terms used in equality monitoring at EFDC

a) Ethnicity

Ethnicity is recorded using the categories provided in the 2001 census. These are as follows:

A. White British	B Mixed	C Asian, Asian British, Asian English, Asian Scottish, or Asian Welsh
English	White and black Caribbean	Indian

Scottish	White and black African	Pakistani
Welsh	White and Asian	Bangladeshi
Other white British	Any other mixed background	Any other Asian background
Irish		
Any other white background		
D. Black, Black British, Black English, Black Scottish, Black Welsh	E. Chinese, Chinese British, Chinese English, Chinese Scottish, Chinese Welsh	F. Other ethnic group
Caribbean	Chinese	Any other background
African	Any other Chinese background	
Any other black background		

b) Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 defined disability as 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities'. The definition is intended to include all forms of physical and mental disability including sensory impairment, mental illness and learning disabilities. It includes people who have a disability where the condition is likely to last longer than 12 months or is likely to recur.

The disability categories to be used are as follows:

Category	Examples
None	
Physical impairment	Arthritis significantly affecting one's life, repetitive strain disorders, chronic back problems
Sensory impairment	Sight impairment (but not if corrected by spectacles), hearing impairment, speech impairment.
Learning disability	Down's syndrome
Mental health problem – long term (ie lasting at least 12 months)	Schizophrenia, Bi-polar disorder, clinical depression.
Other health condition – long term (ie lasting at least 12 months)	Cancer, HIV/AIDS, diabetes, heart/circulation complaints, chrohn's disease, multiple sclerosis

In addition, the service user/customer is to be asked to state the nature of the disability (if they are happy to do so).

c) Gender

In April 2007 the Gender Equality Duty came into force as part of the Equality Act. The duty requires local authorities to pay due regard to eliminating unlawful sex discrimination. This duty extends to trans gender and transsexual staff. Under the Gender Recognition Act 2004 it is possible to be legally recognised as one gender whilst having the physical characteristics of another.

The categories used for monitoring purposes are therefore simply:

- Male

- Female

d) Age

As part of the monitoring process service users and customers are to be asked to provide their age at the point of contacting the Authority.

A sample monitoring form is attached at appendix one.

5. Services which should be monitored for adverse impact

It is not always appropriate to monitor all services and policies provided by EFDC, nor is it necessary to do so. If the service or policy is in an area which has been judged to be of low impact to the fulfilment of the Authority's statutory duties with respect to equality then there is no requirement to carry out monitoring. However, many services have a high relevance to the duties.

It is the responsibility of individual Directors to decide which services and policies should be monitored. However, the following should be monitored as far as is reasonably practicable:

- Take up or non take up of services
- Litigation against the organisation by individuals (for example, Employment Tribunals)
- Customer complaints
- Customer compliments
- Whether information about services or proposed changes to services reaches different groups and is understood by them (for example, the feedback from customer consultation exercises)
- Employment statistics: recruitment, promotion, disciplinaries, grievances, training, personal development reviews, employment benefits.

6. When monitoring should take place

Equality monitoring should be integrated into existing processes. It is not always practicable to introduce new processes, and often adds an administrative burden which is not necessary. Instead, monitoring information should be included in existing application and assessment processes. The exact frequency of monitoring will depend on the nature of the function itself. Examples include:

- A 'one-off' time limited snapshot exercise
- An ongoing and continuous process with regular review
- Periodically (monthly, quarterly, annually, occasionally).

Directors will be responsible for determining the frequency of monitoring processes for the services and policies within their responsibility. Depending on the nature of the service/policy the monitoring questions may be asked either verbally or by use of a proforma.

7. Use and reporting of monitoring data

Equality monitoring data should be collected where it can provide information on service take up and can therefore act as a basis for change to the service, should this be necessary. Consideration needs to be given to the following:

- Who will collect the data, when during the provision of the service it should be collected, how and from whom
- How the data will be stored
- Whether the data will be analysed manually or by computer programme
- Who will report the findings, to what body and how often
- How the information will be compared to baseline data, such as neighbourhood profiles from the census

8. Data Protection Act requirements

Prior to carrying out equality monitoring you are advised to seek the advice of the Data Protection Officer. The Data Protection legislation exists to protect individuals against the misuse of their personal data held on both manual and computerised records. Where an individual's personal data is stored it is likely to be necessary to obtain the individual's explicit consent to hold and process the data. It is also a requirement that the data is not used for any purpose other than that which it was collected for and for which consent was granted by the individuals. To comply with the Data Protection Act the following statements must be included in any monitoring documentation:

- A statement informing the person that completion of some or all data is voluntary and is not a condition of receiving the service, benefit or job in question.
- An explanation as to why the EFDC is carrying out equality monitoring, and what the information will be used for.
- A statement to the effect that the information collected will be treated in confidence and access to it/use of it will be restricted to the purposes for which it was collected.
- A statement signed by the service user/customer/employee giving written consent to the collecting, storing and use of the data collected.

9. Organisational responsibilities for equalities monitoring data

a) the Executive and Scrutiny functions, and other bodies of elected Members

Members are responsible for commissioning, receiving and analysing equalities monitoring data, and making recommendations following consideration of it. Any data presented to Members will be in an anonymous form and will not permit the identification of an individual.

b) Management Board and the Corporate Executive Forum

These bodies will be responsible for commissioning, receiving and analysing equalities monitoring data for the purposes of improving services to the public and the operational efficiency of those services. Any data presented to Members will be in an anonymous form and will not permit the identification of an individual.

c) Directors and senior managers

These members of staff will be responsible for the proper collection, storage, interrogation and presentation of monitoring data in accordance with this policy.

d) The Human Resources Manager

This officer will be responsible for organising training for staff with equalities monitoring data responsibilities, as appropriate.

e) Staff with data collection duties

All staff who are responsible for the collection of equalities monitoring data are required to do so within the guidelines laid down in this procedure.

10. Data quality implications of collecting equalities monitoring data

All data collected under the provisions of this policy must comply with the Council's data quality strategy.

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Equalities Monitoring Form

We ask for this information so that we can monitor the impact of our services on all sections of the community. We want to offer our services in an open and accessible manner.

The information you provide to us will be kept in confidence and will only be used to monitor the take up of our services, so that no individual or group of people are disadvantaged in the provision of services or employment opportunities. This monitoring information could be passed on to other services of the Council who need this for the same purpose. If we do this, the information will be given confidentially and will not be used for any other purpose. No personal information, such as your name or address, will be used in collating statistical data.

Whether you decide to provide us with this information or not, it will not affect the service or job opportunities you receive from the Council either positively or negatively. Our purpose in asking is to improve the overall quality of our services.

If you are prepared to provide this monitoring information to us please sign the declaration below.

Declaration

I hereby give consent for Epping Forest District Council to hold the information I have provided on this monitoring form for the purposes described above.

Name _____ Date _____

Are you: Male Female

Do you consider yourself disabled? Yes No

Please give further details of any disability in the space below if you wish:

- Physical or mobility impairment _____
- Sensory impairment (hearing, speech, vision) _____
- Learning disability (eg Downs syndrome) _____
- Mental health difficulties (eg chronic depression) _____
- Non-visible condition (eg diabetes, epilepsy) _____

Your age _____

I would describe my ethnic origin as (please tick one box)

- | White
British | Mixed | Asian or Asian British |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> English | <input type="checkbox"/> White and black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> Indian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scottish | <input type="checkbox"/> White and black African | <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Welsh | <input type="checkbox"/> White and Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other mixed | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Asian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Irish | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any other white | | |

Black, Black British, Black English, Black Scottish, Black Welsh

- Caribbean
- African
- Any other background

Chinese, Chinese British, Chinese English, Chinese Scottish, Chinese Welsh

- Chinese
- Any other background

Other ethnic group

- Any other background not covered above (please give details) _____

Epping Forest District Council

Corporate Equality Action Plan – First Review, March 2008

1. Introduction and purpose

This corporate equality action plan supports the Council's existing key equality documents, namely:

- The Race Equality Scheme
- The Disability Equality Scheme
- The Gender Equality Scheme
- The General Equal Opportunities Policy
- The Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy.

The purpose of this plan is to set out the key corporate equality responsibilities, objectives and actions for the Council over the next five years, thus enabling the Council to meet its requirements under the relevant legislation, progress in its attainment of the Equality Standard for Local Government (measured by the Audit Commission in BVPI 2a), provide responsive services to the community, treat its staff fairly and endeavour to make the workforce sensitive to the needs of the community it serves.

2. Responsibility for this action plan

Member level responsibilities

The Corporate Equality Action Plan is the responsibility of the Cabinet. This includes both the content of the Plan and the allocation of appropriate resources to meet the required actions. The Cabinet member with overall responsibility for equalities development is the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services.

The member body responsible for monitoring achievement of the actions contained in this plan is the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Standing Panel, which will monitor progress on an annual basis.

Officer level responsibilities

Management Board is responsible for the day to day monitoring of this action plan, the allocation of specific resources to tasks and achievement of actions, under the direction of Cabinet. The Board is also responsible for on going monitoring of the plan on a regular basis, and making recommendations for changes and re-prioritisation of tasks.

3. How the actions contained in this plan have been identified

Over the last four years the Authority has carried out impact assessments of the services which have been judged to have most effect on the lives and experiences of service users and customers. The services which fell into this category were identified during the development of the Race Equality Scheme, and those services were then assessed with respect to issues of race, gender and disability. As a result of this exercise

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services began to develop service level action plans to take forward equalities improvements. This Corporate Equalities Action Plan (CEAP) is not written to reflect the content of service level action plans, rather it takes the themes common to those plans which need to be addressed on a corporate level and prioritises the resulting actions into this plan. The CEAP also takes actions identified in the individual equality schemes referred to above and incorporates them into one document. Further actions will be added as a result of our on-going work with Disability Groups in the District, and our work on Gender Equality.

4. Consultation on this Plan

As noted above, the actions contained in the CEAP have been identified via the Impact Assessment process. In addition, these actions are the subject of consultation with internal stakeholders such as staff and the trade unions, and external bodies such as Voluntary Action Epping Forest and a range of local special interest and user groups, where these exist. The results of this consultation exercise will be incorporated into future drafts of the action plan as priorities are identified and change.

5. Information available on equalities issues and priorities in the District

At the time of the development of this plan the majority of information about the equalities profile of the District was available from information held by Central Government and the Audit Commission. In addition, a wide range of information about the views, needs and aspirations of service users and non users has been generated by the three yearly BVPI Satisfaction Surveys and a wide range of consultation exercises carried out in individual services. Details of these consultation exercises are available in the annual Consultation Plan which is approved by Cabinet.

This Plan also recognises that valuable information is available from individual monitoring exercises where service users are asked to provide their individual equalities profile (ie age, gender, disability, race). Examples of this are the monitoring of employment applications and customer complaints. Furthermore, the Plan recognises that consideration needs to be given to the widening of the scope of this monitoring to encompass a larger range of service activities than is currently the case.

6. How this action plan is structured

The Equality Standard for Local Government is structured into four discrete areas:

- Leadership and corporate commitment
- Consultation, community development and scrutiny
- Service delivery and customer care
- Employment and training

These headings have been used to group the actions contained in this plan, and to demonstrate the Council's commitment to improving its performance against this Standard.

7. Further information about the CEAP

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This can be obtained from the Performance Management Unit (01992 564180) or stautz@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

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CORPORATE EQUALITY ACTION PLAN – First review, March 2008

ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER(S)	TARGET DATE	COMMENTS
General and specific equality duties				
Amend the Council's Race Equality Scheme to bring it up to date to incorporate the current and proposed list of services that are relevant for meeting the Council's statutory duties.	High	Deputy Chief Executive (DCE)	July 2008	The RES has been reviewed in March 2008 and will be presented to the Cabinet for approval in the new municipal year.
Produce procedures and guidance to ensure impact assessments and formal consultation are carried out for relevant proposed policies and the outcomes reported before decisions are made and published	High	DCE	July 2008	Procedures for ensuring equalities impact assessments are completed for all new or amended policies/functions have been drawn up and will be implemented in the new municipal year. Committee reports (both Cabinet and O&S) will be required to include equalities issues. Proposals for equality monitoring agreed by Management Board.
Review Managers' Toolkit and Impact Assessment Form following experience of assessing proposed policies under the disability and gender equality duties to ensure they remain fit for purpose.	High	DCE	July 2008	Impact Assessment Toolkit reviewed November 2007. New IA proforma was introduced in September 2007 based on best practice.
Review Gender Equality Scheme and Disability Equality Scheme in the light of consultation exercises which aim to identify the priorities of disadvantaged groups with respect to the delivery of services.	Medium	PMU	2010	Consultation exercises required to identify priorities for changes to service delivery from 'seldom heard' groups.
Improving impact of Council services				

CORPORATE EQUALITY ACTION PLAN – First review, March 2008

ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER(S)	TARGET DATE	COMMENTS
<p>Ensure that services that are specifically related to community activities and education (such as town centre management, leisure services, community and culture, arts and museums) use suitable opportunities to proactively promote harmony and understanding between different sectors of the community.</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Directors</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>This action will be kept under review as specific opportunities arise. As an example, a Youth Council has recently been established and this initiative will assist the Council in engaging with a 'seldom heard' group which has traditionally been difficult to access.</p>
<p>Accessibility of services</p>				
<p><u>Written communications:</u> Ensure all published documents, leaflets, brochures etc. could be offered in different reading formats (e.g. Braille, large print, computer disc) for sight impaired readers if required.</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Directors</p>	<p>July 2008</p>	<p>To be provided on request (not speculatively), based on the particular needs of the reader. The Council participates in the Essex County Council translation and interpretation contract.</p>
<p>Include standard wording on all public documents, forms and regular publications (such as <i>The Forester</i> magazine) to communicate their availability in different reading formats on request.</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>DCE and Directors</p>	<p>Phased over 4 yrs - completed by 2011</p>	<p>Phase introduction and costs by introducing this as each publication is due for reprinting or, where reprinting isn't due for a long time, by addition of printed labels.</p>
<p><u>Face to face communications:</u> Advertise availability of translation and interpreting services to service users.</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Directors</p>	<p>July 2008</p>	<p>This is carried out on a limited basis, and will be extended as opportunities arise.</p>
<p><u>Spoken and telephone communications:</u> Review the current availability and plan for future provision/use of facilities to aid/assist people with hearing impairments to access Council services e.g. via induction loops, text phones and TypeTalk.</p>	<p>Med</p>	<p>DCE and Directors</p>	<p>July 2009</p>	<p>TypeTalk is a national relay telephone service operated by the RNID which provides a link via an RNID TypeTalk operator between a text phone user and a hearing person using a standard telephone. The provision of text phones at key contact points would allow direct communication from text phone users to Council staff, if this is shown to be required.</p>
<p>Publicise the facilities that are available.</p>	<p>Med</p>	<p>DCE and Directors</p>	<p>July 2009</p>	

CORPORATE EQUALITY ACTION PLAN – First review, March 2008

ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER(S)	TARGET DATE	COMMENTS
Ensure the list of employees able to provide such translation services is kept up-to-date and publicised internally.	Med	HR Manager	July 2009	Also need to check that these employees continue to be willing to offer this service – (including the employee who knows BSL) – and that their managers are willing to release them to carry out these duties.
Determine whether external funding may be available for face-to-face and written translations.	High	PMU	July 2008	Access to Work funding is available to help support employees with disabilities requiring any special assistance. This is available from Job Centres.
Ensure all managers, front-line staff and councillors are aware of all facilities provided by the Council to enhance accessibility of council services and information; know how to access them; advise members of the public who may benefit from using them.	High	PMU	July 2008	Some managers know about and use some of the above facilities – others don't, but would welcome more information. The general principles of this element of the action plan are covered in the Council's diversity training. However, further work may be required to ensure that staff are fully aware of these issues.
Consider whether the Council's Compliments and Complaints booklets should be more widely available	Med	DCE and Complaints Officer	April 2009	These booklets are currently only available in Council offices and satellite buildings such as leisure centres.
Continue to work towards enhancing physical access to Council buildings where needs have been identified.	High	Directors	April 2009	The Disability Equality Consultative Group is considering access as part of its work. Any recommendations will be included in the next version of the Disability Equality Scheme.
Monitoring				
Develop a corporate policy statement on equality monitoring and communicate to the public and all staff.	High	DCE	July 2010	Produced November 2007 and agreed by Management Board. Presented to Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel in March 2008. Directors to consider what additional services should be subject to monitoring.
Implement or amend IT systems to collect/store/analyse monitoring data.	High	Directors	July 2010	To be considered after the introduction of the Monitoring Policy.

CORPORATE EQUALITY ACTION PLAN – First review, March 2008

ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER(S)	TARGET DATE	COMMENTS
Agree standard corporate monitoring categories with ethnic origin monitoring based on the 2001 census categories – together with any additional break down required to reflect local demographics.	High	DCE	July 2010	Included in Monitoring Policy referred to above.
<p>Prepare guidance on equality monitoring for service managers, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - what types of monitoring data to collect and possible methods (linked to existing processes as far as possible) - how data should be analysed and acted upon - to whom the information should be reported and when (e.g. with annual dates for reporting each service) - how to comply with data protection principles and the Freedom of Information Act - model wording to let service users know why monitoring is being carried out and how the information will be stored and used. 	High	DCE	July 2010	<p>Monitoring to take 2 forms – depending on the service and ability to collect valid data:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compare service users with population comparators to check whether services are being used by all sectors of the community in similar proportions. This data should be checked at regular intervals to establish trends. 2. Compare proportions of people at different stages in a Council process (e.g. compare percentages of applicants or eligible people from different groups with those who apply or are successful) to ensure Council policies and decisions are not having any unforeseen adverse impact. <p>Guidance produced and now being implemented.</p>
Circulate details of the Epping Forest District equality profile based on 2001 census to all Directors to provide a benchmark against which their service-related data can be compared.	High	PMU	July 2010	Already contained as appendix to current and new draft RES.
Review information sources already available within EFDC or held by partner organisations to establish what monitoring data is currently available and where gaps need to be filled.	High	PMU	July 2010	Some of this work has already been done via the impact assessments. Other elements will be identified as a result of the introduction of the Equality Monitoring Policy.
Consult relevant contractors and partners to see whether they are able to assist with the collection of relevant monitoring data and whether they supply similar services to other public sector bodies.	Medium		July 2010	To be carried out as part of the implementation of the Equality Monitoring Policy.

CORPORATE EQUALITY ACTION PLAN – First review, March 2008

ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER(S)	TARGET DATE	COMMENTS
All relevant services to start gathering monitoring data to highlight any adverse impact in relation to service users, potential users and/or non-users (as appropriate), linked to their gender, disability, race and age.	High	Directors	All services to have monitoring systems in place by July 2010	Depending on each service's circumstance, monitoring could be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an ongoing activity on all users/transactions - an ongoing activity on a random sample of users/transactions - one-off exercises/surveys carried out at prescribed times (e.g. for 3 months every two years, for one week every six months, etc).
Include equality monitoring questions when conducting surveys/consultation exercises so that the views of different sectors of the community can be analysed separately. Ensure this analysis is carried out and reported.	High	Directors	July 2010	Consultation and Engagement Strategy to be amended to give guidance to Directorates on equality monitoring in consultation and related exercises.
Ensure all public-facing staff understand the purpose of monitoring and know how to deal with any enquiries or complaints concerning monitoring.	High	Directors, Learning and Development Advisor	July 2010	Identify whether there is a training need and how best this is to be addressed.
Carry out an equal pay audit.	High	HR Manager	12/06	Completed.
Implement formal monitoring of councillors' equality profiles (in agreement with group leaders) and report together with the workforce profile.	Low	Assistant to CE	December 2011	Equality action plans to address any significant under-representation from particular groups in both employment and council membership.
Consultation				

CORPORATE EQUALITY ACTION PLAN – First review, March 2008

ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER(S)	TARGET DATE	COMMENTS
<p>Agree a corporate policy relating to consultation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - existing service users/customers - potential service users/customers - those who are eligible for but do not use Council services (whether by choice, lack of awareness or inability to access the service) - those who are affected by Council services. 	High	DCE	April 2006	Consultation strategy and planning process agreed by Cabinet.
<p>Seek information about consultation processes used by other authorities to learn from practical experience of what has worked well.</p>	Med	PMU	July 2009	This might be possible via the Essex Performance Improvement Network.
<p>Where appropriate, ask open questions during feedback surveys/consultation exercises about customers' needs related to their equality profile.</p>	High	Directors	Ongoing	E.g. Do they have particular needs in terms of this service related to their religion, beliefs, disability, cultural traditions, sex, age, etc.? To be considered as part of DCE's review of consultation and engagement.
<p>Seek general feedback from Council taxpayers on all forms of Council communication including written, telephone, face-to-face and electronic.</p>	Med	PMU	April 2011	The DCE is drawing up a revised approach to consultation which will complement the work already carried out on seeking feedback on publications such as the Council Plan, annual budget setting and annual report.
<p>Use the outcome to develop a corporate Communications Strategy and to address any identified problems.</p>	High	PMU	July 2009	Evaluate existing consultation guide and make improvements, as part of the DCE review of consultation..
<p>Develop a common approach and guidance to different consultation methods and equality monitoring for all consultation exercises, to share best practice.</p>	High	DCE and PMU	July 2009	This has been built into the Impact Assessment process.
<p>Consider the extent to which joint consultation can be undertaken to increase efficiency and reduce consultation fatigue of shared customers/users.</p>	Med	DCE and PMU	April 2010	This is to be considered as part of the DCE's review of consultation, and on an on-going basis as consultation exercises arise.
<p>Consider extent to which consultation/surveys being carried out by other organisations (formal and informal partners, contractors and other public or voluntary sector bodies) could be used to provide quality feedback for EFDC.</p> <p>Ensure employees are regularly consulted about employment matters and working for the Council and that the results of any large-scale consultation exercises can be analysed by equality profile.</p>	High	HR Manager	Jan 2007	Completed - Action Plan produced. Further surveys will be planned in due course.

Staff and member training

CORPORATE EQUALITY ACTION PLAN – First review, March 2008

ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER(S)	TARGET DATE	COMMENTS
Training needs (normally identified via annual service plans and the PDR process) to be supplemented by corporately identified training needs (for members and staff) on cross-cutting topics such as equality and diversity.	High	HR Manager with Management Board	Ongoing	All staff attend 'Dealing with Diversity' course. Training needs will be kept under review.
Policy decision - attendance at equality training to be made mandatory for all managers and employees.	High	Management Board	Programme completed by March 2010	The training is mandatory, and is in the process of being completed.
Consider ability to create training records for all staff so that managers can check who has attended diversity training.	Med	HR Manager	April 2011	Training records are kept up to date on the KCS system and can be interrogated to check attendance. Information on training throughput is monitored as part of the HR equality monitoring indicators.
Review development needs of all existing staff and members to determine gaps in diversity training.	Med	HR Manager with Managers and Assistant to CE	April 2011	Member training on equalities included in the current programme, with good attendance. Induction programme for staff currently being reviewed.
Ensure equality issues are adequately covered via the induction process or induction training for all new staff and members	Med	HR Manager	April 2011	Member training on equalities included in the current programme, with good attendance. Induction programme for staff currently being reviewed.
Ensure line managers are informed if newly appointed employees have not attended diversity training.	Med	HR Manager	Already in place	No further action required.
Ensure newly promoted or newly appointed managers attend corporate training to cover: - equality legislation (employment and service delivery) - non-discriminatory employment practices (e.g. on recruitment, performance management, etc.) - practical guidance on meeting the Council's general and specific duties to promote equality in service delivery.	High	Learning and Development Adviser/Line Managers (LADA)	April 2010	Managers are required to attend training on Equality and Diversity. Recruitment and Selection course has a strong equalities element to it, and all recruiters are required to attend this. Further training needs to be identified once all staff have attended the Equality and Diversity training courses.
Provide regular updates on equality legislation and the practical impact on service provision for service managers.	High	PMU/LADA	April 2009	This is currently covered in Team Briefing.
Ensure the need to promote equality is specifically included in all other training where issues could arise.	Med	All managers responsible for training	Ongoing	Examples include: emergency planning, media training for councillors, employment procedures and practices, etc. All corporate courses reviewed by LADA to ensure that equalities issues are adequately covered.

CORPORATE EQUALITY ACTION PLAN – First review, March 2008

ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER(S)	TARGET DATE	COMMENTS
Provide written guidance for managers about the different ethnic/religious/cultural groups within the community and their needs.	High	PMU	April 2009	
Incorporate equality discussions into all services' team meeting agenda, at least once a year, to refresh awareness. This can be done via Team Briefing.	High	MB	April 2009	Core briefings to be cascaded from MB.
Devise equality performance management measures for managers which are reviewed at regular intervals.	Med		April 2010	Some options to be considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - agreeing corporate or service specific PDR managerial objectives on equality, - use corporate equality competencies or - develop checklist of standard questions on how managers are implementing the Equality Standard or implementing equality action plans.
Ensure service managers, HR officers and others responsible for providing leadership on statutory equality duties and responsibilities have the necessary knowledge and skills to do so.	High	HR Manager, LADA, PMU with MB	Ongoing	Relevant staff to attend regular courses, briefings, or have access to update material.
Create a network of equality champions and/or a corporate equalities WG to support heads of service in implementing this agenda.	High	DCE	April 2009	DCE and MB to consider how best to further embed equalities in the organisation's structure.
Working with external partners and contractors				
Check wording in all current agreements/contracts where external bodies are involved in delivering services to the public on behalf of the Council.	High		April 2010	The Procurement Hub has built suitable equality clauses into contracts procured on behalf of the Council.
Seek agreement for any amendments required to existing agreements/contracts if this is considered necessary/ desirable to meet statutory duties under equality legislation.		Management Board		
Consider requesting formal written confirmation that all existing external partners/contractors are operating in accordance with the Council's equal opportunities policy and its statutory duties	Med		April 2011	The Procurement Hub has built suitable equality clauses into contracts procured on behalf of the Council.

CORPORATE EQUALITY ACTION PLAN – First review, March 2008

ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER(S)	TARGET DATE	COMMENTS
Ensure all new contracts/agreements take full account of the Council's duties to promote equality and that clauses are written in, where appropriate, to require other parties to support those duties.	High		April 2010	The Procurement Hub has built suitable equality clauses into contracts procured on behalf of the Council.
Consider issuing written guidelines for external partners and contractors, setting out the Council's equality duties and the implications for anyone delivering services on behalf of the Council.	Med	As above	April 2011	This is already included in procurement documents. Consider extending this to other forms of agreement.
Consider whether places on Council diversity training courses could be offered to external partners and contractors delivering services on behalf of the Council.	Lower	HR Manager with MB	April 2010	Such places to be offered at a cost to be determined
Positive action measures				
Participate in the Essex Strategic HR Partnership's positive action campaign to encourage applications for local government employment from under-represented groups and to make the LG employer brand more attractive.	High	HR Manager	Dec 2007	Financed by ODPM funding. Campaign ended December 2007 and a full evaluation will take place.
Include positive action statements on job adverts to encourage applications from groups that are significantly under-represented in the workforce.	Med	HR Manager and Directors	April 2010	Given the proposed arrangements for recruiting via a 'Talent Pool' approach at the end of the recruitment contract, this action will be kept under review.
Employee welfare				
Check extent of racial incidents and all forms of harassment/bullying experienced by employees from members of the public or other staff.	High	HR Manager	April 2009	Corporate violence at work guidance produced April 2007. Staff survey considered harassment - actions included in this Action Plan. Review of existing Harassment and Bullying Policy in hand.

CORPORATE EQUALITY ACTION PLAN – First review, March 2008

ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER(S)	TARGET DATE	COMMENTS
Consider whether monitoring of informal (as well as formal) harassment/bullying allegations by staff could be implemented to show levels of reporting and types of issues.	Med	HR Manager	April 2010	Review of Harassment and Bullying Policy has indicated that this would be difficult to achieve due to issues of confidentiality. However, the revised policy proposes greater use of mediation services, and this could be monitored by HR to give a better picture of informal complaints.
Review Council processes for recording and following up any acts of verbal/racist abuse against employees or any others working on behalf of the Council e.g. via incident report form and ensure these are examined at an appropriate level (e.g. by HR Manager) and actions are taken to protect staff when required.	High	H&S Officer HR Manager Directors	April 2009	This was considered as part of the introduction of the violence at work policy. It will be reconsidered as part of the implementation of the revised Harassment and Bullying Policy.
Provide support for employees who suffer racist or other forms of abuse and hostile behaviour – whether overt or disguised.	High	Line managers	Ongoing	As need arises. Included in Violence at Work Policy.

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Report to: Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel

Date of Meeting: 27 March 2008

Portfolio: Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services (Councillor C. Whitbread)



Subject: Gender Equality Scheme and Disability Equality Scheme – first annual report on progress

Officer contact for further information: D. Macnab (Ext 4051)

Committee Secretary: A. Hendry (Ext 4246)

Recommendations:

That the Scrutiny Panel notes the progress that has been made with implementing the Gender Equality Scheme and Disability Equality Scheme, and comments on this.

Report:

The Gender Equality Scheme

Background

1. The Council is required under the Equality Act 2006 to take actions which promote gender equality, proactively taking forward the statutory duties placed upon it. The general statutory duties placed upon the Council are:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment; and
- To promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

2. In addition the Council has specific statutory duties as follows:

- To prepare and publish a Gender Equality Scheme;
- To consider the need to develop actions to address the causes of any gender pay gap;
- To gather and use information on how the Council's policies affect gender equality;
- To consult stakeholders and take account of any relevant information;
- To assess the impact of its current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality
- To implement the actions set out in its Gender Equality Scheme; and
- To report against the scheme every year and review the scheme every three years.

3. At its meeting of 16 April 2007 the Cabinet agreed the adoption of a Gender Equality Scheme for the Council and noted that the scheme would be subject to consultation with stakeholders and community groups, and be monitored by the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel. The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of progress which has been made with the implementation of this scheme.

4. Although it had been intended that consultation with the community would take place over the last year leading to the development of an action plan for gender equality, in practice this has not happened. This is due to the fact that priority has initially been given to consultation on the Disability Equality Scheme, the details of which are described later on in this report. Given the consultation resources available it has been necessary to prioritise accordingly. That said, consultation proposals relating to gender are being drawn up for implementation in late Spring 2008, as noted elsewhere on this agenda.

Gender Equality Monitoring

5. The Panel will note that a key statutory duty placed upon the Council is to gather and monitor information on how the Council's policies affect gender equality. This is an area where considerable progress has been made, and elsewhere on this agenda is a report entitled 'Race Equality Scheme and progress with equalities work'. Attached to the Race Equality Scheme is a document 'Equality Monitoring 2008/09' which provides information relating to the monitoring of the Authority's activities with respect to race, gender and disability. Included in this is detailed monitoring about a number of equality measures relating to gender, and the conclusions which can be drawn from this. The Panel is asked to consider this, particularly the employment data relating to the Council's workforce, which is set out at Section (a) 'Human Resources Monitoring'. This provides an analysis of, amongst other matters, the leavers and starters at the Authority, applications for employment and any pay differentials between men and women. To support this, demographical information is provided relating to the distribution of men and women across the District.

Development and training programmes

6. A key issue that emerges from the monitoring data is that although women make up more than half of the workforce, they are under-represented at senior levels. In order to address this a Women's Development Programme has been launched called 'Springboard'. This programme aims (amongst other matters) to build confidence in participants, enhancing their ability to apply for more challenging roles in the Council, whilst considering some of the issues faced uniquely by women in society and at work. The programme has 28 places and 37 applications were received. In view of the demand, an additional course is scheduled to take place later in the year.

7. Whilst there is clearly a place for programmes such as Springboard, there are other development opportunities in the Council which benefit women, and should lead to greater representation at senior levels. In September 2007 the Authority launched a challenging in-house management development programme. 60% of the delegates are women, from a range of backgrounds in the Authority.

Actions resulting from the Staff Survey

8. The Staff Survey took place in November/December 2006 and included questions on equality and diversity. The majority of respondents felt that the Council treated people fairly as an employer, and that they themselves felt treated fairly. 90% of respondents said that they had not witnessed or experienced any unfair discrimination in relation to service delivery, and 75% said that they had not witnessed or experienced any employment discrimination. Of those stating that they had witnessed or experienced discrimination, women were not significantly represented. Notwithstanding this, the Authority is currently reviewing its Harassment and Bullying Policy to ensure that these matters may be dealt with speedily and effectively.

The job evaluation scheme

9. This scheme ensures that our pay rates for jobs are determined in a way which is free from gender bias. The Authority completed an equal pay audit in 2006 which indicated that there was no gender bias in the operation of the scheme. In completing job evaluation for the whole workforce a harmonization of terms and conditions took place resulting in all

enhancements being available across the board, regardless of job or gender. For example, a bonus scheme had been available to craftworkers who are all male, and this has now been removed.

10. The corporate job evaluation panel continues to monitor equal pay issues, and recently removed descriptions of its 'job experience' and 'length of service' requirements in defined years (for example, some jobs required 'a minimum of four years clerical experience'). The driver for this was the recently introduced age discrimination regulations, but this also had an indirect impact on women, some of whom would be unable to meet this kind of experience requirement due to time away from work childrearing.

Employee Wellbeing Framework

11. As noted above, the Harassment and Bullying Policy is currently being reviewed in light of Staff Survey feedback. In undertaking this piece of work it became apparent that a more holistic approach to staff welfare was required, and as a result an Employee Wellbeing Framework was agreed by Cabinet on 12 November 2007. This sets out for staff the responsibilities of Members, managers and staff, facilities available to promote a healthy work/life balance, health and safety issues, supporting Human Resources policies and Employee Health Services provided by the Council. It is anticipated that this will contribute to the promotion of gender (and other) equality in the workplace, in that individual's needs may be more effectively addressed.

Development of the Youth Council

12. At its meeting of 12 December 2007 the Cabinet agreed the establishment of a Youth Council for members of the public aged between 13 and 17 years. The purpose of this is to provide a point of contact for engagement with this 'seldom heard' group who are not always able to access Council services and contribute to their development. Elections to the Youth Council have taken place, the outcome being that two thirds of the places on the Council are occupied by young women. This provides an excellent opportunity for the Council to engage with this group in developing services and seeking feedback.

Corporate priority: Safe, Clean and Green in Epping Forest

13. At its meeting of 12 November 2007 Cabinet considered a report which concluded that a number of research and customer feedback exercises had raised concerns about some of the Council's front line services, and suggested that the principle of the provision of more integrated 'street scene' and related services through locality based service delivery be developed. The exercises had included:

- the 2006 Epping Forest District Council General User Satisfaction Survey;
- the DEFRA Local Environmental Quality Report; and
- the Rogers Review on enforcement priorities.

14. The feedback from these surveys and reports was that:

- a) satisfaction with the Council was down from 2003 and was below both the Essex and national mean;
- b) satisfaction with street cleansing was slightly better than in 2003 but was significantly lower than the Essex and national means;
- c) perception that the local environmental quality was poor in some areas;
- d) prioritisation of enforcement activities concentrating on national and locally set priorities; and
- e) local concerns regarding levels of environmental and other crime.

15. In response the Cabinet decided that these matters should form a key consideration in the corporate restructuring which was being developed at that time. The newly formed Environmental and Street Scene Directorate has been structured to provide integrated street scene and enforcement activities, thus aiming to provide a more responsive service. The street scene environment is key to issues of community safety and has a direct impact on the quality of life experienced by residents of the District, thus directly promoting the Council's Gender Equality Duties (for example, female safety issues).

Customer Complaints

16. The complaints monitoring statistics indicate that females are more likely to complain about Council services than men. 81% of complainants were female. An analysis of the nature of complaints from females rather than males has taken place in order to identify why so few men proportionally use this service. However at this stage it has not been possible to draw any meaningful conclusions.

Housing Directorate Initiatives

17. The Epping Forest Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership has part funded a Sanctuary Scheme for the District. Under this scheme victims of domestic violence may have a room in their accommodation converted so that it is safe from the perpetrators of domestic violence (for example by the installation of a more robust door and security lock). This provides a place of sanctuary in an incident of domestic violence, from where the police may be called for assistance. The service is available to residents in both public and private housing stock, and two sanctuaries have been created since the launch of the scheme, thus preventing homelessness. As domestic violence is usually perpetrated against women, this initiative has a positive impact on the Council's gender equality duties, and complements the existing 'Stay Safe' Scheme which provides advice and support in cases of domestic violence.

The Disability Equality Scheme

18. The Disability Discrimination (Amendment) Act 2005 placed a duty on the Authority to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons;
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act;
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities;
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons;
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life; and
- Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

19. As with the other equality duties, the statutory duty can be met by undertaking the following functions:

- Carrying out impact assessments in order to ensure that disability issues are mainstreamed into the Council's business;
- Gathering and analyzing evidence;
- Prioritising remedial actions;
- Involving disabled people; and
- Public reporting of progress.

20. In addition to the General Duty, there are Specific Duties placed upon the Council as follows:

- To prepare and publish a Disability Equality Scheme, having involved disabled people in its production;

- To complete the actions set out in the Scheme; and
- Annually report on progress against the Action Plan.

21. The Cabinet agreed the Council's first Disability Equality Scheme at its meeting of 16 April 2007. It was recognized that the Scheme represented an interim position, and that the required Action Plan could only be drawn up following detailed consultation and involvement of representatives from the disability community.

Disability consultation

22. Since that time a number of meetings have taken place between officers of the Authority and the following organizations:

- Disability Essex
- Epping Forest District Access Group
- Guide Dogs for the Blind.

23. In addition representatives from the Epping Forest District Tenants Forum have expressed an interest in attending, and this group will be invited to future meetings. Invitations were extended to a wide range of other disability groups, but they have declined to attend.

24. From the inception of these meetings the Authority decided that it did not wish to set an agenda or priorities for the consultative group, as it was important that concerns, issues and priorities could be voiced in the order of importance decided by disability representatives. In addition the Deputy Chief Executive chairs the meetings to ensure that all parties are aware of the importance of the consultative process.

25. Each meeting of the group focuses on the services provided by an individual Directorate, in a priority decided by the disability representatives themselves. The meetings have so far considered Planning issues, followed by Housing and the Environment and Street Scene Directorates. The appropriate Director is asked to attend each meeting in person, and the session begins with a presentation of the services offered by the Directorate, followed by questions, scrutiny and challenge. At the end of these meetings an action plan will be produced setting out the issues raised and how the Authority intends to address them. Issues which have arisen so far include the positioning and design of street furniture, parking policy and designing new homes to the Lifetime Standard.

26. In addition to the consultation taking place with community representatives, plans are currently being developed to consult staff with disabilities on their views of the Council as an employer.

Disability Monitoring

27. As noted above, monitoring information is collected for a range of functions and activities with respect to ethnicity, gender and disability, and details of recent monitoring activity can be found attached to the report 'Race Equality Scheme and progress with general equalities work', which is considered elsewhere on this agenda.

28. In 2006 a survey of staff was carried out to determine the level and nature of disability in the workforce. Guidance was given on the definition of disability to assist staff, and the outcome was that in 2006 2.04% of the workforce considered themselves disabled prior to the survey, but that figure jumped to 8.31% of the workforce after the survey had been completed. The figure in the working population of the District is 5.15%.

Training and development

29. All staff are required to attend a course entitled 'Dealing with diversity', of which a proportion of the programme is devoted to disability issues. In addition, a specific disability

course is offered in the annual training programme which deals with the experience of disability, and how this affects service users. This course has proved popular and is well attended.

Customer complaints

30. 14% of complaints in 2007/08 were from people who stated that they had a disability. In all cases the disability was described as 'difficulty in getting around'. Further work may be needed to determine whether there is any pattern to the complaints, or particular disability issues arise.

Other issues for the Panel's consideration

Corporate Equalities Action Plan

31. As noted elsewhere on this agenda, the Corporate Equalities Action Plan has been updated to take into account the revision to the Race Equality Scheme. Further updating may be required once the action plans for the Gender and Disability Equality Schemes are produced.

Impact Assessments

32. As noted elsewhere on this agenda, all Impact Assessments are up to date, and services have been assessed with respect to gender, ethnicity and race.

Overall conclusions

33. Although it has not yet been possible to complete the consultation exercises and action plans associated with this process, much work has been completed, with positive outcomes for both staff and the community. This work will now continue and the corporate equality action plan will be updated accordingly.

Reason for decision:

34. To advise the Scrutiny Panel of progress with equalities work, and the fulfillment of the Council's statutory duties.

Options considered and rejected:

35. None. The Council is statutorily required to carry out these activities.

Consultation undertaken:

36. Consultation with disability groups is ongoing, and consultation on the Gender Equality Scheme will commence shortly.

Resource implications:

Budget/Personnel Provision: The actions set out in this report will be met within existing budgets.

Land: Nil

Council Plan/BVPP Reference: Council Plan Section 10 – 'Action Plan': action IP4.

Relevant Statutory Powers: Race Relations (Amendment Act) 2000, Gender Equality Act 2006, Disability Discrimination (Amendment) Act 2005.

Background Papers: None

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: Breaches under the Acts described in the report may also be actionable under, or in conjunction with, the Human Rights Act

Key Decision Reference (if required): None