

# **Cabinet Member for Performance and Capacity**

## **Agenda**

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**Date:** Friday, 12th March, 2010  
**Time:** 1.00 pm  
**Venue:** Fred Flint Room, Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach  
CW11 1HZ

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The agenda is divided into 2 parts. Part 1 is taken in the presence of the public and press. Part 2 items will be considered in the absence of the public and press for the reasons indicated on the agenda and at the foot of each report.

### **PART 1 – MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS PRESENT**

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interests in any item on the agenda

3. **Public Speaking Time/Open Session**

In accordance with Procedure Rules Nos.11 and 35 a period of 10 minutes is allocated for members of the public to address the meeting on any matter relevant to the work of the meeting. Individual members of the public may speak for up to 5 minutes but the Chairman will decide how the period of time allocated for public speaking will be apportioned where there are a number of speakers. Members of the public are not required to give notice to use this facility. However, as a matter of courtesy, a period of 24 hours' notice is encouraged.

Members of the public wishing to ask a question at the meeting should provide three clear working days' notice, in writing, in order for an informed answer to be given.

4. **Minutes of Previous meeting** (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2010.

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**Contact:** Paul Mountford, Legal and Democratic Services  
**Tel:** 01270 686472  
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5. **Data Quality Strategy** (Pages 5 - 16)

To seek approval for the adoption of a Data Quality Strategy for Cheshire East Council and a programme of training to ensure high levels of awareness and compliance.

6. **Draft Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2010-13** (Pages 17 - 94)

To approve the Draft Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2010-2013 and the Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit and Guidance for the purpose of extensive consultation; and to approve an extension to the Interim Single Equality Scheme 2009-10 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2010 to ensure that the Council remains statutorily compliant whilst consultation takes place.

**(There are no Part 2 items)**

**CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the  
**Cabinet Member for Performance and Capacity**  
held on Monday, 15th February, 2010 at Committee Suite 3, Westfields,  
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

**PRESENT**

Councillor David Brown, Cabinet Member for Performance and Capacity

**Officers**

Paul Mountford, Legal and Democratic Services  
Zandra Neeld, Strategic Partnerships Manager  
Maureen Groppe, Partnerships Team

**Apologies**

Councillor L. Smetham, Cabinet Support Member

**27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared.

**28 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION**

There were no members of the public present.

**29 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING****RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2010 be approved as a correct record.

**30 POLICY FOR THE ALLOCATION OF GRANTS FOR 2010/2011**

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Capacity considered a report on the continuation of the Council's grants policy for the next financial year.

The grants system would be fundamentally reviewed during 2010/2011 to ensure that the Council had an equitable system offering a balanced portfolio of grants.

Currently, the aim of the grants scheme was to support small scale community projects that would improve the quality of life for local communities. A policy had been adopted in August 2009 to guide grant allocation. Grants had been made by the former authorities towards the

core costs of a number of voluntary organisations; during 2009/2010, these grants had been continued and budgets identified. In addition, payments had been made by the former Crewe & Nantwich Borough Council comprising grants to parish councils in the sum of £58,449 and ward budgets of £24,000.

The total identified grants budget was £773,975.

A large number of organisations had received funding over recent months which had enabled a wealth of community activity to take place. A similar demand for funding was anticipated for the coming year.

The strategic organisations funded made a significant contribution in helping the Council achieve its objectives for Cheshire East. A future grants scheme could make provision for such funding to be covered by SLAs and to be for a longer term than one year. However, whilst proposals for the longer term were being developed, it was essential that funding to these organisations remained at least at current levels. A number of other organisations depended on their grant funding for some of their core costs. If the Council decided to discontinue this funding it would be necessary to assess the implications and to give proper notice to the organisations concerned. Again, whilst comprehensive grants schemes and criteria were being drawn up, it would be inappropriate to do anything other than provide funding at current levels. All organisations would need to be advised that a review was underway and that they must not depend on funding for 2011/2012.

### **RESOLVED**

That the Cabinet Member for Performance and Capacity agrees

- (1) to adopt the existing Policy for the Allocation of Community Grants for a further 12 months and allocate £63,000 to fund this;
- (2) to continue existing grants to the key strategic organisations funded in 2009/10. To enable the same level of grant aid to be provided, an allocation of £550,240 is required;
- (3) for 2010/2011, to fund those other voluntary organisations which received grants from the former authorities, provided budgets have been identified and transferred to Partnerships. The level of grant to remain at current levels and to enable this to happen, the remainder of the grants pot, ie. £160,735, be allocated for this purpose;
- (4) that all organisations receiving grant for 2010/11 be advised that they must not assume continuation to future years as the Council will be looking to allocate grants in future years linked to the 3 year Medium Term Financial Strategy;

- (5) that applications from any other organisations only be considered if there are exceptional circumstances such as an organisation facing closure. In any such incidences the portfolio holder to determine the level of grant and agree the funding source;
- (6) to continue the payment of grants to parishes in the former Crewe & Nantwich area for a further 12 months, the £58,449 concerned to be funded from reserves if necessary;
- (7) to discontinue the payment of ward budgets to Crewe members; and
- (8) to undertake a fundamental review of grant funding with a view to having new policies and practices in place for the 2011/12 financial year.

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and concluded at 10.55 am

Councillor David Brown

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## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet Member for Performance and Capacity

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**Date of Meeting:** 12<sup>th</sup> March 2010  
**Report of:** Head of Policy and Performance  
**Subject/Title:** Data Quality Strategy

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#### **1.0 Report Summary**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the adoption of a Data Quality Strategy for Cheshire East Council, its wide dissemination across the Council and a programme of training to ensure high levels of awareness and compliance. The Strategy is attached as Appendix 1.

#### **2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 That
- (1) the Data Quality Strategy and supporting actions attached as an Appendix to the report be adopted for Cheshire East Council;
  - (2) the Cabinet Member for Performance and Capacity be confirmed as the Member responsible for data quality; and
  - (3) it be noted that Corporate Scrutiny Committee will take responsibility for reviewing and monitoring data quality arrangements and for overseeing the data quality standards.

#### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 The Council is accountable for its use of resources and must ensure that it uses sound and accurate information to plan and account for its activities. The Data Quality Strategy sets out the framework for an effective and co-ordinated approach to data quality.

#### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 N/A

#### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 N/A

**6.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change  
- Health**

- 6.1 Good data quality supports the effective delivery of all Council policies including climate change and health.

**7.0 Financial Implications for Transition Costs (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)**

- 7.1 None

**8.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)**

- 8.1 Financial decision making relies on sound and accurate data. Poor or incomplete information may result in inefficient use of resources, non-achievement of value for money and failure to deliver the Council's objectives.

**9.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)**

- 9.1 The legislation governing the handling/holding of data has remained the same for a few years now (data protection and freedom of information). However, interest in how data is held has increased and the regulator (the Information Commissioner) has become more active. This is a complex area and one where the local authorities can lose both reputationally and financially if they fail to take their obligations seriously. Breaches of legislation can involve not just civil actions, but also criminal sanctions.
- 9.2 The way that local authorities take decisions is being subjected to greater scrutiny and it is important that when taking such decisions they have the best information that can be obtained available to help inform their decision-making. The quality of the data held plays a critical part in decision-making and if a decision is made which relies upon data that is inaccurate/inadequate, it could lead to a decision being successfully challenged (whether by judicial review, or other means).
- 9.3 The delivery of services can be compromised if data quality is poor. For example, it could lead to services being delivered badly and/or to the waste of public funds. This might be highlighted in an audit, or worse still could cause a local authority to fail in its statutory duties. There are high profile instances of problems caused by poor data handling and sharing and poor quality data heightens the risks involved.

**10.0 Risk Management**

- 10.1 Poor data quality is a risk for all services and is addressed by them in their risk assessments and risk management plans.



## **11.0 Background and Options**

11.1 The Data Quality Strategy defines how Cheshire East Council ensures that data quality is an integral part of operational, performance management and governance arrangements. The Council must ensure that all data it holds is:

- Accurate
- Valid
- Relevant
- Reliable
- Timely
- Complete

The Government and their inspectorates base their assessments of the Council on constantly updated data. Data collected by the Council therefore needs to meet quality standards from collection and entry to end use. The Strategy identifies the key aspects of ensuring data quality and sets out the roles and responsibilities of Council officers involved in entering, calculating, monitoring and reporting performance.

11.2 The Strategy identifies the following officer roles and responsibilities:

- Corporate Management Team: responsible for the strategic approach to data quality as set out, for example, in the Corporate Plan
- Heads of Service: have overall ownership and responsibility for data quality within their service areas
- Team managers: have day to day responsibility for ensuring data quality within their service delivery areas
- Performance team: Reviewing the Strategy and associated action plan
- Responsible Officers: take ownership of data collecting and reporting of specific National Indicators and assure standards
- Technical Officers: are responsible for producing information and applying data definitions
- All staff: responsible for in-putting or extracting data are responsible for quality in respect of this specific data.

11.3 The Data Quality Strategy recognises the important role of Members in delivering and assuring data quality. It places overall responsibility for data quality with the Portfolio holder for Performance and Capacity and responsibility for review of data quality with Scrutiny.

11.4 Important information is passed between the Council, partner organisations and other external agencies. The Data Quality Strategy defines responsibilities for ensuring that partners are aware of the Council's requirements and for assuring data quality.

11.5 As part of the Council's data quality assurance processes the Council has carried out a full audit of a sample of National Indicators drawn from across the National indicator Set. The findings of this audit are being used to update a Data Quality Action Plan.

## **12.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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**Improving Services Together**

# ***Data Quality Strategy***



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## 1 Introduction: Data Quality in Cheshire East

The purpose of this Strategy is to outline how Cheshire East Council will ensure an effective and coordinated approach to data quality. Accompanying this Strategy is an Action Plan which details what needs to be done, by whom and by when.

Data quality is an integral part of our operational, performance management, and governance arrangements. Cheshire East Council has a responsibility to ensure that all data held across the organisation is relevant, fit for purpose, reliable, timely, accurate, and supports pertinently the processes and systems for which it is sourced and retained.

Cheshire East has an obligation to ensure that its employees have an understanding of why they collect data, how it is being measured, and what it will be used for.

All data retained electronically must be stored on relevant and secure IT systems, and subject to IT system control via regular data backups, as outlined in the Council's IT Strategy.

## 2 Objectives of this Strategy

Data is vital in managing and improving our Services, undertaking our day-to-day activities and maintaining accountability. Therefore, we want to maintain the highest standards of data quality, ensuring that we have the right information at the right time at the right cost. In addition, the actions we undertake to ensure data quality will also be considered as part of external audit and inspection and this will be reflected in the organisational assessment undertaken by the Audit Commission as part of Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA).

This Strategy intends to set the guidelines for:

- Putting in place systems, policies and procedures to enable the highest possible data quality, including information that is shared between ourselves and our partners
- Ensuring that all staff, Councillors, partners and any other stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities.

## 3 Definition of Data Quality

There are six key characteristics of good data quality that should be used when assessing performance data:

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### Characteristic

Accuracy	Data should be sufficiently accurate for its intended purposes ('fit for purpose') and should be captured once only, although it may have multiple uses. Accuracy is most likely to be secured if data is captured as close to the point of activity as possible. Appropriate quality checks must be in place to ensure consistent data accuracy, which may be subject to verification via internal and external audit processes.
Validity	Data should be recorded and used in compliance with relevant requirements, including the correct application of any rules or definitions. This will ensure consistency between periods and with similar organisations.

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Reliability	Data should reflect stable and consistent data collection processes across collection points and over time.
Timeliness	Data should be captured as quickly as possible after the event or activity and must be available to support information needs and influence decision-making.
Relevance	Data captured should be relevant to the purposes for which it is used, and will require periodic review to ensure that changing requirements are both considered and acted upon.
Completeness	Data requirements should be clearly specified based on the information needs of the organisation and data collection processes matched to these requirements.

## 4 The National Indicator Set

The new national indicator set, introduced in April 2008, means that the Government and their inspectorates will now base their activity on constantly updated data. Therefore, it is more important than ever to improve the quality of data at the point of collection and entry, to ensure it is fit for purpose throughout the year.

This also means that it is vital to develop data quality systems and processes in partnership with those organisations that contribute to the National Indicator Set. The arrangements for data quality will therefore also be set out in our Local Area Agreement.

## 5 Structure of this Strategy

Listed below are seven key aspects of ensuring data quality. This Strategy will address each of these in turn.

- **Awareness** – everyone recognises the need for good data quality and how they can contribute
- **Definitions** – everyone knows which Performance Indicators are produced from the performance information they provide and how those indicators are defined
- **Recording** – information is recorded and entered on an ongoing, timely basis to ensure information can be collated effectively
- **Verification** – there are verification procedures in place as close to the point of input as possible
- **Systems** – are fit for purpose and staff have the expertise to get the best out of them
- **Output** – Performance Indicators are extracted regularly, efficiently and communicated quickly
- **Presentation** – Performance indicators are presented in such a way as to give an easily understood and accurate picture of performance.

### 5.1 Awareness

Data quality is the responsibility of every member of staff entering, extracting or analysing data from any of the Council's performance information systems and every relevant officer should be aware of his or her responsibilities. The commitment to data quality will be communicated clearly throughout the Council to reinforce this message. It is important, therefore, for key Council Plans and Strategies to include reference to data quality and a clear indication of its importance.

Contravention of the Council's Data Quality Strategy considered to be wilful or deliberate "neglect of duty or behaviour liable to bring the Council into disrepute" may be subject to disciplinary review under the definition outlined in the Cheshire East Disciplinary Policy.

Each performance indicator will be allocated a 'responsible officer' – a named Council officer who has internal responsibility for ensuring consistency in the application of definitions and data collection systems. Where responsibility for an indicator clearly lies with a partner organisation, the responsible officer will liaise with that organisation to ensure that data is available as and when required.

## **5.2 Definitions**

All officers who are involved in entering, calculating, monitoring and reporting performance indicators should have an awareness of how they contribute to managing performance effectively. This, as a minimum, should be knowledge of the performance indicator, what it is used for, what it is measuring and whether there are important technical guidelines that need to be taken into account.

It is important that data is recorded consistently, allowing for comparison over time, and national benchmarking. If local performance indicators or proxy measures are used, clear definitions must be set.

## **5.3 Recording**

There must be adequate controls over the input and recording of performance data to ensure that this is consistently accurate. The aim should be 100% accuracy 100% of the time. Officers will have clear guidelines and procedures for using systems and will be adequately trained to ensure that information is being entered consistently and correctly. Data quality will be a key component of performance management training, available to all key officers and Members.

Information should be recorded on time as required. In particular, performance information should be recorded in-line with the Council's quarterly performance management cycle.

## **5.4 Verification**

Data requirements should be designed along the principle of 'getting it right first time' in order to avoid unnecessary time spent on verifying data. Yet, there may still be the need for verification processes and where this is needed it should exist closest to the point of data input.

Within the National Indicator Set, a significant amount of data and performance information is supplied from external sources. Where possible, we will work alongside our partners to decide what data should be collected and what standards should be applied.

When entering into contracts with service providers it is essential that, wherever relevant, there is a requirement to provide timely and accurate performance information, and that we are clear with the contractor about their responsibilities for data quality.

## **5.5 Systems**

Arrangements for collecting and recording data, and reporting it as performance information, will be integrated as far as possible into the wider business planning and performance management processes. Therefore, responsibility for maintaining a robust control environment for information systems lies centrally and will be developed as part of the Council's performance management and information management arrangements.

## 5.6 Output

Best use can be made of performance data if it is produced and communicated on a timetable that allows for management action.

Performance indicators, particularly those that can be measured in-year, will be reported and monitored through the quarterly performance monitoring and reporting process. This process also links the performance against indicators to the priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan and the actions set out in Service Plans.

It is important that performance information is subject to scrutiny and challenge, where appropriate, before being passed up the line for management action. This can be undertaken in a number of ways, including performance review meetings, scrutiny reviews and other officer and Member performance groups.

## 5.7 Presentation

Presenting information in an appropriate manner leads to better, more informed decision-making and, ultimately, improved performance.

When information is presented it should be in a clear, concise format that highlights key information for Members and officers to view. Where appropriate, background evidence may be necessary if called upon.

Importantly, consideration should be given to the audience, whether internal or external, as data can often be used in a variety of ways to suit a variety of purposes. Therefore, what is suitable for one set of stakeholders may not be understood or be useful for others.

It is also important to provide comparative figures for prior periods and/or comparable organisations or groups.

# 6 Roles and Responsibilities

## 6.1 Officers

If organisations are to achieve consistently high standards of data quality to underpin their performance information, clear leadership from the top of the organisation is essential, together with a comprehensive management and accountability framework.

In addition, responsibility for data quality will be reflected in job descriptions, where appropriate, as well as the appraisal process.

**Corporate Management Team** is responsible for the strategic approach for data quality, as set out in key Council documentation, for example the Corporate Plan.

**Heads of Service** have overall ownership and responsibility for data quality within their service areas and will ensure that:

- Managerial reviews of data quality are undertaken
- Targets and achievements are communicated appropriately
- Commitment to data quality is stated clearly in job descriptions for all relevant roles
- Staff recognise data quality responsibilities as integral to their role

**Team Managers** have day to day responsibility for ensuring data quality within their service delivery area, and that:

- New members of staff receive appropriate training and instruction to ensure an awareness of how and why data is collected
- Staff have access to this Strategy and other relevant Policies and procedures



- Indicator calculations are correct, timely, evidenced and complete, and reviewed regularly for relevance

**Planning & Performance Team** has responsibility for:

- Reviewing this Strategy and Action Plan
- Submitting any indicator information to the Audit Commission that is not held on the hub or by partners
- Reviewing and retaining the corporately held list of all indicator responsible officers
- Advising Directorates and Services of new and amended performance indicators so that data quality processes can be set up/amended
- Checking and following-up data returns and ensure that appropriate explanations are provided for performance exceptions
- Maintaining links to national performance indicator guidance and disseminate information as appropriate
- Developing the performance management framework and systems to incorporate data quality functionality
- Coordinating cross-directorate performance peers group
- Working with colleagues to ensure that data is used to establish or maintain timely, accurate and relevant performance measures with appropriate approaches to target setting.

**Responsible Officers** will be identified to take ownership of data collecting and reporting of specific national and local indicators. It is important that this role is seen as a core part of their job and not an 'add on'. Each responsible officer should ensure that:

- The procedures needed to produce the information to the required standard are documented
- They have sufficient ability to allocate resources, programmes and people to help achieve the objectives
- Where appropriate, they work with the corporate performance management team to ensure that systems are fit for purpose
- Quarterly reports will be produced on each indicator.

**Technical Officers** will be identified to support the process of data collecting and reporting of specific national and local indicators. It is important that each technical officer is able to support – and deputise in the absence of the responsible officer – in producing indicator information. Each technical officer should ensure that:

- They have detailed knowledge of the indicator definition and the systems/processes which are used to produce this indicator
- They are responsible for producing the performance information/indicator in a timely way
- They can answer detailed questions regarding the calculation of the indicator, interrogation of related systems, and data quality
- They keep appropriate records of systems and procedures and any quality issues.

**All staff** inputting or extracting data have responsibility for:

- Understanding how – and why – data is being collected, and how it will be used
- Getting it right first time
- Their own knowledge of relevant definitions and available guidance
- Up-to-date record keeping
- Providing updated information to the performance management team in line with the performance management timetable and reporting against any specific action plans in under-performing areas.

## **6.2 Councillors**

The Portfolio holder for Performance and Capacity has overall Member responsibility for data quality.

Working together with officers, Members will have responsibility for quarterly performance reports.

Members have an important scrutiny role in assessing the performance of the authority and, therefore, the quality of this data should be subject to Member-driven review as part of this role. This will help to ensure further consistency and accountability.

## **6.3 Partners**

Important information is passed between the Council, partner organisations and other external agencies. Where performance information is provided directly to the Council by external agencies our intention is to work together, wherever possible, to provide assurance. It is the responsibility of each Service within the Council for making partner organisations aware of our policy objectives and expectations. Any doubts about performance data quality should be addressed.

Responsibility for data verification lies within the Service receiving or sending information to and from our partners.

It is also important in developing cross-organisational agreements, frameworks, plans and strategies that consideration is given to performance data and the accuracy of it (for example our Local Area Agreement). The key aspects of data quality, as described in section 3, should be applied

## **7 Training and development**

Key contacts for submitting performance information to the Council's performance management team will be trained, as appropriate, to ensure that appropriate information is submitted in a timely and efficient manner. This may also apply to partners and any training should cover new requirements as and when they arise.

Service and Team Managers should develop their own competency in managing performance information and to understand how the use of indicators can help them in their jobs.

## **8 Data Quality Action Plan**

Implementation of the Data Quality Strategy is through the actions listed in the Action Plan.

This Data Quality Strategy and Action Plan will be reviewed in 12 months. The delivery of the Data Quality Action Plan will be monitored on a quarterly basis by the Planning & Performance team, in line with the performance management cycle.

## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet Member for Performance and Capacity

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**Date of Meeting:** 12<sup>th</sup> March 2010  
**Report of:** Head of Policy and Performance  
**Subject/Title:** Draft Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2010-13

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#### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 This report introduces the Draft Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2010 – 2013.

#### 2.0 Recommendation

That the Cabinet Member for Performance and Capacity

- (1) approve the Draft Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2010-2013 and the Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit and Guidance, the documents to be approved in draft to allow extensive consultation with partners, voluntary, faith and community stakeholders, staff and citizens; and
- (2) approve an extension to the Interim Single Equality Scheme 2009-10 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2010 to ensure that the Council remains statutorily compliant whilst consultation takes place.

#### 3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 Cheshire East Borough Council is committed to providing high quality, customer-focused services for all people living in, working in or visiting the Borough. We are determined to further develop our Equality and Diversity agenda both to meet our statutory responsibilities, provide quality customer services and as part of the achievement of our corporate aims and objectives. Our aim is inclusion for all. As a new Council created in April 2009, we developed an interim Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2009- 2010. We have now moved forward and we have developed this Single Equality Scheme for a three year period, beginning in April 2010 and ending in March 2013.

The Scheme is in draft form to allow the Council to consult widely with partners, voluntary, faith and community stakeholders, staff and citizens so that their views can also be reflected in the Scheme and Action Plan. We intend to finalise the three year Scheme and Action Plan by June 2010 following these extensive consultations.

The information and intelligence used to produce the draft Scheme builds on the work of previous authorities and includes the views and comments of a range of stakeholders. The Research and Intelligence Team prepared an equality profile of the Borough in 2009 and this has been updated in 2010 to inform the development of the Scheme. The ethos of understanding our communities and mapping issues relating to equal access and inclusion was the basis for the action plan. Cheshire East Council is a relatively new organisation and needs to have a greater understanding of the way people live in, work in and visit the Borough. It also needs to understand the issues of disadvantage and how these impact on people so that more can be done to make things fairer.

To assist Council Services in making things fairer, a new Draft Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit and Guidance has been developed and forms an Appendix to the Draft Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2010-2013. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a way to make sure that individuals and teams think carefully about the likely impact of policies or procedures, strategies, functions and services, to identify any unmet needs, and to provide a basis for action to improve services where appropriate.

It systematically assesses and records the actual, potential or likely impact of a service, policy or project – or a significant change in a service, policy or project – on different groups of people.

The toolkit goes further than identifying the impact of policies, services and procedures. It also assesses whether people's needs are being met and if legislative requirements are being met.

The Council has a legal responsibility under the Race, Gender and Disability Equality Duties to assess both our existing and new policies and functions, and to set out how we will monitor any possible negative impact on disability/gender and race equality.

In addition, the Council is working towards the Equality Framework for Local Government which requires us to impact assess for race gender and disability, and demonstrate commitment to addressing the needs of and impact assessing around sexual orientation, age, and religion and belief, the 6 strands within our Draft Single Equality Scheme 2010-2013.

#### **4.0 Wards Affected**

4.1 N/A

#### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

5.1 N/A

**6.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change  
- Health**

6.1 No implications for climate change

6.2 Policy implications for health are recognised within the Interim Single Equality Scheme. The Scheme will support the addressing of health inequalities

**7.0 Financial Implications for Transition Costs (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)**

7.1 None

**8.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)**

8.1 None

**9.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)**

9.1 As detailed in the Report the Interim Single Equality Scheme will cover the Council's statutory duties and responsibilities under current equality legislation

**10.0 Risk Management**

10.1 The Council will not meet its statutory duties and responsibilities contained in equality legislation if the Interim Single Equality Scheme is not approved

**11.0 Background and Options**

11.1 The Scheme covers the Council's statutory equality duties in relation to race, disability and gender and our non-statutory duties in relation to age, sexual orientation and religion/belief. While there is no statutory requirement to meet general and specific duties in these areas, broadening our approach to all six recognised equality strands illustrates the Council's commitment to equality for all, and puts it in a good and realistic position for expected changes in national equalities legislation. The Council has incorporated these groups into this Draft Single Equality Scheme also, and has identified four additional groups: Carers, Transgender People, Gypsies and Travellers and Disadvantaged White People for specific action.

**12.0 Overview of Year One and Term One Issues**

12.1 None

**13.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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***Cheshire East Council***  
***Single Equality Scheme 2010-2013***

## Introduction Chief Executive and Portfolioholder for Performance and Capacity

Cheshire East Borough Council is committed to providing high quality, customer focused services for all people living in, working in or visiting the Borough. We are determined to further develop our Equality and Diversity agenda both to meet our statutory responsibilities, provide quality customer services and as part of the achievement of our corporate aims and objectives. Our aim is inclusion for all. For this reason we are reviewing every aspect of our equalities programme, we have effectively begun again with the benefit of having some experience of what works and what we can do better. As a new Council created in April 2009, we developed an interim Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan. We have now moved forward and we have developed this Single Equality Scheme for a three year period, beginning in April 2010 and ending in March 2013.

The Scheme is in draft form to allow us to consult widely with partners, voluntary, faith and community stakeholders, staff and citizens so that their views can also be reflected in our Scheme and Action Plan. We intend to finalise our three year Scheme and Action Plan by June 2010 following these extensive consultations.

This document and the programme of action it supports is designed to help the Council meet its statutory obligations covering both fair employment practices and access to all the Council's services.

It is comprehensive in scope, encompassing all the functions of the Council and all categories of equality and diversity.

As well as aiming to meet the standards required and set out in statutory legislation (and related codes of practice), the Council will seek to improve and develop its approach and work towards the achievement of best practice and standards required by regulatory bodies and defined in national standards such as the Equality Framework for Local Government.

The Council also recognises its community leadership role in the Borough and will work closely with the Local Strategic Partnership and with other major partners to promote equality and inclusion within the Borough

The Council will seek to prioritise its efforts to reflect the Borough's demographic and economic context, whilst also recognising the absolute requirement to fulfill its statutory obligations.



## 1 Introduction

Cheshire East Borough Council's Single Equality Scheme serves two purposes:

1.1 To set out the Council's overall commitment to equality and diversity in one document.

The Council's Single Equality Scheme contains:

- our approach to equality and diversity in Cheshire East
- how we will manage, plan and incorporate equality and diversity in our day to day work.

1.2 To be the 'umbrella' document for our statutory and non-statutory equality schemes.

The Council's Single Equality Scheme contains:

- our statutory equality duties in relation to race, disability and gender and our non-statutory duties in relation to age, sexual orientation, religion/belief.

The Council's Single Equality Scheme will help us ensure that we focus more on the outcomes that matter to the community and people who use our services; and that our services are more accessible and delivered effectively.

The Council's Interim Single Equality Scheme incorporated, for the first time, information, issues and areas for action in relation to age, religion/belief and sexual orientation. While there is no statutory requirement to meet general and specific duties in these areas, broadening our approach to these equality strands illustrates our commitment to equality and inclusion for all. We have incorporated these groups into this Single Equality Scheme also, and have identified four additional groups: Carers, Transgender People, Gypsies and Travellers and Disadvantaged White People for specific action.

## **2 Specific Duties**

The Equality Bill, due to come into force in 2010, will replace current legislation with a new streamlined and strengthened Single Equality Duty, which will be extended to cover sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, religion or belief and those with caring responsibilities.

Under the Equality Bill, public bodies will have to consider how services affect a wide range of different people. The purpose of the new Bill is to make Britain a fairer place, where people have the opportunity to succeed whatever their race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief. The Bill extends the existing duties and places additional equality duties on the public sector. Public authorities already have a legal duty to consider how their spending decisions, employment practices and service delivery can affect people according to their race, disability or gender.

## **3 Who does the scheme apply to?**

This scheme applies to:

- users of the Council's services and visitors to our buildings and facilities
- members of our community and visitors to our Borough
- councillors
- employees – including any person on secondment from other organisations or on fixed term contracts
- partners and service delivery agencies
- volunteers
- freelance and temporary staff representing the Council and
- contractors and sub-contractors

## 4 Our Commitment and Vision

The Council's Single Equality Scheme will support and supplement the Council's corporate priorities, as set out in our Corporate Plan,

Our Vision is to.....

Work together to improve community life

We will

- enable all children and young people to fulfill their potential
- improve the wellbeing, health and care of people
- ensure that people in local communities have a greater say about how resources are targeted in their area
- work with others to make all our communities safer places to live, work play and visit
- enable people to have a good quality of life irrespective of where they live or their social or economic background
- shape and maintain strong and prosperous neighbourhoods in which our residents are skilled and economically active, where businesses want to invest and where people want to visit
- provide an attractive and sustainable environment which communities can be proud of

## 5 Our Values

The overall aim of the Council is to have a positive impact on all sections of the communities that we serve. We have developed a set of core values and key behaviours to underpin this aim. These are collected together as ASPIRE

Action

“take responsibility for making the right things happen”

We will

- Implement agreed changes as quickly as possible
- Balance urgency with quality and efficiency in delivery

- Take responsibility for solving problems where possible
- Be flexible about the way we work

#### Support

“work and learn together in order to succeed”

We will

- Communicate clearly and openly
- Share information and best practice with others
- Work together being prepared to compromise
- Encourage and support others to achieve their potential

#### People

“put customer and community needs at the heart of what we do”

We will

- Do our best to understand people’s needs and requirements
- Treat each person as an individual providing choice where possible
- Work hard to make our processes simple
- Agree realistic timescales and keep people informed

#### Integrity

“be open honest and fair expecting the same of others”

We will

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect
- Speak up when others are behaving inappropriately
- Face up to difficult or awkward questions and situations
- Separate personal feelings from professional requirements

#### Recognition

“value all views, efforts and achievements”

We will

- Involve all members of our team, valuing their differences
- Acknowledge everyone's efforts and contributions
- Give and receive feedback positively and constructively
- Celebrate success

## Excellence

"strive to improve all that we do"

We will

- Take the initiative and make suggestions
- Keep up to date with new developments
- Try new ideas and approaches
- Reflect and learn from our own and others' experiences

## 6 How we will incorporate Equality

The Council's Single Equality Scheme will incorporate equality by:

- integrating equality into all our functions, procedures and policies
- ensuring that the Council's priorities incorporate the principles and values of this scheme
- ensuring that arrangements are in place to monitor, evaluate and report on our progress against our single equality scheme action plan as well as our progress on mainstreaming equality issues
- ensuring that we engage effectively with stakeholders and local communities in delivering and monitoring the scheme;
- embedding equality into our service planning and practices and
- embedding equality into the management, monitoring and implementation of this scheme into the Council's performance framework

The Corporate Management Team (CMT) will be accountable for the implementation and enforcement of this Scheme. This will strengthen the Council's commitment to the Scheme, as it will be owned centrally and not by just one section of the Council. The ethos of the scheme will be thread through all corporate plans and policies and will be apparent in all Council activities.

## **7 How the scheme Was Developed**

The information and intelligence used in producing this scheme has built on the work of previous authorities and included the views and comments of a range of stakeholders. This includes:

- Rationalising existing equality schemes and equality strategies of the county and district councils
- Analysis of findings from previous consultation events and information used to produce, and prioritise the previous schemes and strategies. This was quite recent intelligence and, therefore, still relevant.
- Preparing an Equality Profile 2010

## **8 Council Priorities for Equality and Diversity and what we do next**

Analysis of intelligence and data gathered through the development of this scheme has helped us to determine the following priorities

### **8.1 To have a modern and diverse workforce**

The ability to deliver responsive, personalised services will depend in a large part on the composition, skills, understanding and commitment of our workforce. The implementation of this priority will need to ensure that:

- relevant equality objectives are built into workforce strategies
- there is an understanding of the local labour market
- there is an understanding of the barriers equality groups face
- all major employment policies are equality assessed
- plans are in place to improve representation at senior levels of women, Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic officers and officers with disabilities

- training and development programmes address equality issues
- there is effective action to address equal pay
- there is a workplace culture in which staff are treated with dignity and respect

## **8.2 To foster community engagement and satisfaction**

We recognise the importance of community engagement and participation and we want to move far beyond simple consultation exercises, important as they can be, to find innovative ways of involving communities and neighbourhoods. However, communities of place are not always synonymous with communities of interest and it remains important to have the means to involve these communities of interest in decision making as well as service and workforce planning.

## **8.3 To have responsive services and excellent customer care**

Service provision, whether provided directly or procured or commissioned, remains a central function. The implementation of this priority will require all Directorates to personalise services to meet the needs of people with different backgrounds and ensure fair access.

## **8.4 To understand and know our community**

Our society is becoming more diverse. Understanding differences is no longer just an issue for urban areas with large black, asian and minority ethnic (BME) groups. The prosperity and cohesion of all communities are affected by differing age, gender, disability, religious and sexual orientation profiles. It is also important to understand differences within communities. There are many forms of disability; gender too is a very wide category and there will be great differences, as well as similarities, in the experience of women. Many areas of the Borough are also ethnically diverse and the experience of all groups will be affected by socio-economic factors. Today it is impossible to assume we know the composition of our communities – we have to find that out.

We believe that work on ‘Knowing your communities and equality mapping’ will also provide the evidential basis for other work on community cohesion, customer care and will be the basis for work on the public duties and the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA).

The term ‘equality mapping’ has been added to the more familiar ‘knowing your communities’ to emphasise the importance of understanding difference in the context of other major issues such as health, education, community safety, access to work and identifying where the equality gaps are for different groups. Measuring the gaps should be the basis of identifying local priorities and key outcomes. It will be impossible to develop an outcome-focused approach without this core evidence.

## **8.5 To embed and promote equality within our partnerships, procurement and commissioning**

Progressing the equality agenda in Cheshire East requires working in partnership with local primary care trusts, the police and fire and rescue services and the voluntary and community sector. Local strategic partnerships (LSPs) will often be the natural vehicle for such partnerships. Narrowing equality gaps and improving the life chances of different groups will require a pooling of evidence, resources and action planning.

Of particular importance will be a robust process for equality impact assessments (EIAs) and the implementation of action plans, equality proofing procurement and commissioning and monitoring access.

## **8.6 To have an effective performance framework and demonstrate continuous improvement**

These equality priorities will inform and influence the development of service equality and diversity action plans. This will shape our equality and diversity agenda via monitoring and progress reporting. The Equality Impact Assessment process is a vital part of this performance management framework and is included as an appendix to the Single Equality Scheme 2010-2013.

The Council has set out its intention to be confirmed as an achieving Council under the Equality Framework for Local Government. The priorities in the Single Equality Scheme and the three year Action Plan will confirm the Councils achieving status and show areas of excellence assessed by the peer review.



## 9 Equality strands and Council Commitments

This is a Single Equality Scheme. It is important to look at the different aspects of diversity separately and in detail as outlined below. This will help us to recognise and respect the many varied and extensive needs of our community.

<b>AGE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>4% of Cheshire East residents are aged 16-18, 6% are 19-24 year-olds, 33% are in the 25 to 49 range and 17% are between 50 and retirement age. In other words, 60% of the Council's population is of working age.</b> Source: 2008 mid-year population estimates. ONS Crown Copyright 2009</li> <li>• <b>0-15s account for a further 18% of residents, with people of retirement age (22%) making up the remainder. Nearly one in ten (9%) of the population is aged 75 or above.</b> Source: 2008 mid-year population estimates. ONS Crown Copyright 2009</li> <li>• <b>A higher proportion of older people living in income-deprived households live in the Macclesfield area.</b></li> <li>• <b>Rates of claimants of Disability Living Allowance were higher amongst 60 - 69 year olds than any other 10-year age group. (Department of Work and Pensions 2009)</b></li> </ul>	<p>We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity for younger and older people. We recognize that society can have negative attitudes, stereotypes and myths about youth, ageing, younger and older people. These attitudes and beliefs can lead to both younger and older people being socially and economically disadvantaged, excluded and marginalised. We believe that younger and older people have the right to equality of opportunity and that they make a significant and valuable contribution to the community of Cheshire East</p> <p>Age equality means securing the equal participation in society of people of every age, securing a balance between equality of opportunity and respect for difference.</p> <p><b>We will</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Promote positive images of younger and older people</b></li> <li>• <b>Challenge patronising or discriminating attitudes</b></li> <li>• <b>Provide support, assistance and care to older and younger people to enable them to lead independent lives</b></li> <li>• <b>Support older and younger people according to their individual need</b></li> </ul>
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<b>Disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Cheshire East nearly one in four people suffer from a long term illness which limits their day to day activities; this figure is similar to that of England and Wales.</li> <li>• The latest (2008/9) survey data suggest that 31,600 (14.5%) of working-age residents have a disability.<sup>1</sup> The proportion of working-age males with a disability is the same as that for working-age females (14.5%). (Source: Annual Population Survey Jul 2008 - Jun 2009, ONS, NOMIS)</li> <li>• It is also estimated that 21,700 (10.0%) of working-age people are both DDA and “work-limited” disabled (i.e. their disability restricts the sort of work they can do). A further 5,700 (2.6%) are DDA-only disabled and 4,200 (2.0%) are only work-limited disabled (Source: Annual Population Survey Jul 2008 - Jun 2009, ONS, NOMIS)</li> <li>• Ten percent of the adult population in Cheshire East are un-paid carers, of these people nearly one in six provide more than fifty hours of care per week.</li> </ul>	<p>We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination for disabled people.</p> <p><b>We will</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove barriers to access, particularly to housing, employment and services, information and buildings</li> <li>• Encourage good practice in the private sector through our procurement and commissioning arrangements and enforcement powers</li> <li>• Support employees with caring and domestic responsibilities who may need to work part time or flexible hours or work from home</li> <li>• Uphold the Social Model of disability and our guiding principles in our role in procurement and in our partnership duties</li> <li>• Promote positive images of disabled people</li> <li>• Make the environment as safe as possible and challenging antisocial and bullying behaviour against disabled people</li> <li>• Provide support assistance and care to disabled people to enable them to lead independent lives and according to their individual need</li> <li>• Enable disabled people’s active participation</li> <li>• Involve disabled people in the changes and improvements we make</li> <li>• Consult with disabled people on issues affecting them rather than with people acting on their behalf</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
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<b>Gender</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The % of unemployed females who are long-term unemployed is higher than the male rate (Census 2001).</b></li> <li>• <b>Lone parents in Cheshire East are 7.5 times more likely to be female than male (Census 2001).</b></li> <li>• <b>Women are significantly more likely than men to work for less than 30 hours per week whereas men are significantly more likely than women to work for more than 49 hours per week. (Census 2001).</b></li> <li>• <b>Women are more likely to claim Disability Living Allowance than men. (Department of Work and Pensions 2009)</b></li> <li>• <b>50.9% of all Cheshire East residents are female, according to the most recent (2008) population estimates, and only 49.1% male. However, among residents of working age<sup>2</sup>, the balance is reversed (52.9% male and 47.1% female) Source: 2008 mid-year population estimates. ONS Crown Copyright 2009</b></li> </ul>	<p>We are committed to combating sex discrimination and sexism promoting the equality of women and men.</p> <p>We recognize that society has stereotypes for women, and men and they can lose opportunities because of these stereotypes</p> <p><b>We will</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Support employees with caring and domestic responsibilities who may require to work part time, flexible hours or work from home.</b></li> <li>• <b>Work in partnership with other agencies to eliminate sexual harassment, sexual violence domestic abuse and other hate crimes</b></li> </ul>
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<p><b>Race</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Four out of five residents in 2008 felt that people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>A very high proportion of residents say they are white British (96%)</b>  <b>Estimates suggest that 93.4% of Cheshire East's population is White British. 2007 data suggest that around 13,200 (3.7%) of Cheshire East's residents are from non-white ethnic minority groups. Of these non-white residents, Asians (5,000, or 1.4% of the total population) form the largest group, followed by people of mixed race (3,300, or 0.9%). 2,000 residents (0.6% of the total population) are Black and 2,800 (0.8%) are Chinese or from other non-white groups.</b></p> <p><b>However, ethnic composition varies by age, with non-whites making up a larger share of the 0-15 year-old population (5.2%) than of working-age residents (4.1%) or people of retirement age (0.9%).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Over the last five years Cheshire East has experienced a high number (6,272) of workers registering on the Worker Registration Scheme, second only to Manchester within the North West. The majority of the workers were Polish (83%), with many working in or around Crewe.</b></li> </ul>	<p>We recognise that black and minority ethnic people experience discrimination on the basis of colour, race, nationality, religion, and ethnic origin. This discrimination manifests itself in areas such as housing, employment, education and access to services. The Council will take all necessary measures to prevent and tackle racial harassment and assist black and minority ethnic people freedom from harassment The white population is a recognised group under equality legislation. We recognise that disadvantage within this group exists and can impact on social and economic mobility</p> <p><b>We will</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Gain a better understanding of all ethnic and faith groups, their background and needs and how we respond to them</b></li> <li>• <b>Encourage dialogue between different racial groups on our services</b></li> <li>• <b>Promote activities that celebrate diversity generally and foster understanding and respect for the culture and faith of all our residents</b></li> <li>• <b>Encourage all ethnic groups to exercise their rights as citizens and participate in the democratic process</b></li> <li>• <b>Support the voluntary and community sector to promote good race relations</b></li> <li>• <b>Counter myths and misinformation that may undermine good community relations</b></li> <li>• <b>Promote the active participation of minority communities in shaping the future of Cheshire East</b></li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within the area there is also a presence from the Gypsies and Traveller community. Research suggests that over half felt that they had been treated unfairly because of their ethnic background, with around 15% considered themselves to have a disability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that our employees, contractors and partners fully understand the principles of good race relations</li> <li>• We will deliver specific actions to improve the lives of disadvantaged white people and communities</li> </ul>
<b>Religion and Belief</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More than 80% of Cheshire East residents are Christian (Census 2001), higher than the national average.</li> <li>• 3,275 people are from the Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim or Sikh faiths (Census 2001), but demographic changes since the last Census are expected to have increased this number.</li> <li>• Immigration from Eastern Europe, particularly Poland in the Crewe area, is expected to have also increased the numbers of Roman Catholics.</li> </ul>	<p>We recognise that people can face discrimination because of attitudes in society towards the faith communities to which they belong. Faith-based hate crime is a new phenomenon developing a character that is distinct from race hate crime</p> <p>We also recognise that a persons religious beliefs may mean that they have different needs, demands and expectations, which require flexibility on the part of a service provider or employer.</p> <p>We are committed to eliminating discrimination on the basis of religion or belief</p> <p><b>We will</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with faith groups within our community to gain a better understanding of their needs</li> <li>• Work with faith groups to promote equality and cohesion within our communities</li> <li>• Challenge stereotypes and improve knowledge about faiths and beliefs</li> <li>• Promote harmony and understanding between</li> </ul>

		<p>different faith groups with the view of promoting community cohesion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenge discrimination on the grounds of religion and belief</li> <li>• Promote equality for employees and service users, regardless of their religion or belief</li> <li>• Provide responsive and appropriate services for all sections of the community</li> <li>• Create an environment free from harassment and victimisation for faith groups</li> <li>• Improve communication, participation and engagement with faith groups</li> <li>• Challenge behaviours, attitudes and practices which cause offense or isolate faith groups</li> </ul>
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Around six percent of the adult population are estimated to be lesbian, gay or bisexual. Across Cheshire East this equates to 17,700 adults. Between 2006 and 2008 there were 276 civil partnerships across Cheshire.</li> <li>• Survey results of lesbian, gay and bisexual people indicate that around half would expect to face barriers to selection as a local government candidate in the North West for either the Labour or Liberal Democrat Party. Selection to the Conservative party was felt to be even more difficult with nine out of ten respondents expecting to face barriers to selection in the North West.</li> </ul>	<p>Cheshire East Borough Council is committed to combating discrimination faced by lesbians, gay men and bisexual and transgender people. We want to ensure equality of opportunity for lesbians, gay men and bisexual and transgender people across services and employment.</p> <p><b>We will</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate and act against homophobic and discriminatory attitudes and behaviours in the workplace and services</li> <li>• Take advice from lesbians, gay men and bisexual and transgender people to ensure that policies, procedures and services are inclusive and effective</li> <li>• Respect the rights of individuals to be open about their sexual orientation</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In addition, nine out of ten would expect to face barriers to becoming a school governor in the North West, the worst of all nine English regions.</li> <li>• Older lesbian, gay and bisexual people have differing living and family arrangements than heterosexual people; they are two and half times more likely to live alone and they are four and a half times less likely to have children to help when needed. This will inevitably place a higher reliance on formal services and care. However, fear of discrimination and fear of disclosure – or ‘outing’ – often prevents such groups from accessing such services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tackle homophobia, challenge stereotyping and improve knowledge about lesbians, gay men and bisexual and transgender people</li> <li>• Make the environment as safe as possible and challenge antisocial or bullying behaviour against lesbian, gay men and bisexual and transgender people</li> <li>• Monitor and evaluate policies and procedures</li> <li>• Ensure that the recruitment, employment and promotion of our employees is inclusive and fair for lesbians, gay men and bisexual and transgender people</li> <li>• Work with groups to promote and raise awareness of the lesbians, gay men and bisexual and transgender community</li> </ul>
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## **10 Legal Issues**

The list below provides a round-up of all the current equality and diversity legislation that the council must comply with.

### **Civil Partnerships Act 2004**

This Act provides legal recognition and parity of treatment for same-sex couples and married couples, including employment benefits and pension rights.

### **Disability Discrimination Act 1995**

This Act outlaws discrimination of disabled people in employment, the provision of goods, facilities and services or the administration or management of premises.

### **Disability Discrimination Amendment Act 2005**

This Act introduces a positive duty on public bodies to promote equality for disabled people.

### **Employment Equality (Age) Regulation 2006**

This protects against discrimination on the grounds of age in employment and vocational training. It prohibits direct and indirect discrimination, victimisation, harassment and instructions to discriminate.

### **Employment Equality (Religion & Belief) Regulation 2003**

This directive protects against discrimination on the grounds of religion and belief in employment, vocational training, promotion and working conditions.

### **The Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005**

This introduces new definitions of indirect and indirect discrimination, harassment, explicitly prohibits discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy or maternity leave, and sets out the extent to which it is discriminatory to pay a woman less than she would otherwise have been paid due to pregnancy or maternity issues.

### **Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulation 2003**

This directive protects against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in employment, vocational training, promotion, and working conditions.



**Equal Pay Act 1970 (Amended)**

This gives an individual a right to the same contractual pay and benefits as a person of the opposite sex in the same employment, where the man and the woman are doing like work, work related as equivalent under an analytical job evaluation study, or work that is proved to be of equal value.

**Equality Act 2006**

This establishes a single Commission for Equality & Human Rights which replaces the three existing commissions. It introduces a positive duty on public sector bodies to promote equality of opportunity between men and women and eliminate sex discrimination. It protects against discrimination on the grounds of religion and belief in terms of access to goods, facilities and services.

**Gender Recognition Act 2004**

The purpose of this Act is to provide transgender people with legal recognition in their acquired gender.

**Race Relations Act 1976**

This Act prohibits discrimination on racial grounds in the areas of employment, education and the provision of goods, facilities and services and premises.

**Race Relations Amendment Act 2000**

This places a statutory duty on all public bodies to promote equal opportunity, eliminate racial discrimination and promote good relations between different racial groups.

**Race Relations Act (Amendment) Regulation 2003**

This introduces new definitions of indirect discrimination and harassment, new burden of proof requirements, continuing protection after employment ceases, new exemption for a determinate job requirement and the removal of certain other exemptions.

**Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006**

This Act seeks to stop people from intentionally using threatening words or behaviour to stir up hatred against somebody because of what they believe.

### **Sex Discrimination Act 1975**

This Act makes it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of sex. Sex discrimination is unlawful in employment, education, advertising or when providing housing, goods, services or facilities. It is unlawful to discriminate because someone is married, in employment or advertisements for jobs.

### **Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities**

The Framework was to become active in 1998. The broad aims of the Convention are to ensure that the signatory states respect the rights of national minorities, undertaking to combat discrimination, promote equality, preserve and develop the culture and identity of national minorities, guarantee certain freedoms in relation to access to the media, minority languages and education and encourage the participation of national minorities in public life.

The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities defines a national minority implicitly to include minorities possessing a territorial identity and a distinct cultural heritage.

### **Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999**

This Act seeks to prevent sex discrimination relating to gender reassignment. It clarifies the law for transgender people in relation to equal pay and treatment in employment and training.

### **Equal Treatment Directive (EC Directive 76/207/EEC)**

This provides that there will be no discrimination whatsoever on grounds of sex, either directly or indirectly, by reference in particular to marital or family status. Similar provisions exclude discrimination on grounds of sex in the conditions for access to all jobs or posts, whatever the sector or branch of activity and to training. The principle of equal treatment with regard to working conditions, including dismissal, has the effect of guaranteeing men and women 'the same conditions without discrimination on the grounds of sex'. The Directive can be directly relied upon by employees within the public sector regardless of whether or not its provisions have been incorporated into UK law.

### **Directive on Racial and Ethnic Discrimination**

The Council of Ministers agreed this Directive on 6 June 2000 which will provide a minimum level of protection against racial discrimination common to all Member States. It prohibits racial discrimination not only in employment but also in education, social security, healthcare, access to goods and services and ensures that victims will have the right of redress in all Member States. Member States have three years from the entry into force of the Directive in which to take the necessary measures to implement it.

### **Anti Discrimination Directive**

The Member States of the EU reached agreement on this Directive aimed at combating discrimination in the employment field, including age discrimination, in autumn 2000. It requires Member States to prohibit direct and indirect discrimination in employment and extends to recruitment, promotion, vocational training and working conditions, including dismissal and pay. The Directive does provide a defense to direct discrimination on grounds of age: differences of treatment will not constitute direct age discrimination if they are “objectively and reasonably justified by a legitimate aim” and “the means to achieve it are appropriate and necessary”. Member States are required to implement legislation prohibiting discrimination on grounds of religion and sexual orientation by late 2003 and on grounds of age by late 2006.

### **Protection from Harassment Act 1997**

This legislation was predominantly aimed at “stalking” but it has implications for employers and employee behaviour in the work place. The Act states that a person must not pursue a course of conduct which amounts to harassment and which he or she knows or ought to know amounts to harassment. Such harassment is defined as “alarming the person or causing the person distress”. A “course of conduct” must involve conduct on at least two occasions. The test is whether a reasonable person in possession of the same information would have thought that the behaviour constituted harassment.

The Act also makes it a criminal offence to pursue a “course of conduct” including speech, which causes someone else to fear that violence will be used against them. Again this conduct must take place at least twice. The criminal penalty for this harassment is six months imprisonment or a maximum fine of £5000 and/or being made subject to a restraining order.

Employees who are victims of harassment may sue for damages for stress and anxiety and for financial loss. The Act provides employees with both a criminal and a civil remedy for bullying at work which comes within the statutory definition of harassment.

### **Human Rights**

Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, whatever our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status. We are all equally entitled to our human rights without discrimination. These rights are all interrelated, interdependent and indivisible. Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights gives people the right to enjoy their other human rights without discrimination on such grounds as sex, race, colour, language or religion.

## **11. Training and development**

Equality and diversity training and development will be available for all employees and councillors and will be fully integrated into the councils learning and development program, with additional development available based on job requirements.

## **12. Complaints**

If a member of the public feels that they have suffered harassment or been treated unfairly by the Council because of their sex, colour, race, nationality, ethnic group, regional or national origin, age, marital status, disability, political or religious belief, sexual orientation or class, they should report this without fail to the Council's complaints officer. We have a separate procedure dealing with complaints. Complaints by staff will be dealt with under the grievance or dignity at work policies, as appropriate.

We encourage our employees and others with serious concerns about any aspect of malpractice within the organisation, to come forward and voice those concerns through the Whistleblowing Policy. The main aim of the Whistleblowing Policy is to allow employees and others to speak without fear about actual or potential wrongdoing/malpractice.

We take all external and internal complaints seriously and will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour. Complaints about councillors will be investigated using the Members' Code of Conduct and our Standards Committee. Monitoring complaints is also another way of gathering information to see how we are meeting our equality duties. We will report annually on complaints made and action taken as part of monitoring the Council's Interim Single Equality Scheme.

## **13. Partnerships and procurement**

### **Partnerships**

Where partnerships do not have a separate legal identity and are therefore not bound by the general duty in legislation, we will apply our own duties and ensure that the work of partnerships promotes equalities. All partnership working arrangements that the council participates in will

be subject to EIA to ensure that there are no adverse impacts on a particular community as a result of the partnership activity or governance arrangements.

## Procurement

We have published guidance to ensure that contractors and suppliers meet our legal requirements to promote equality and diversity. This will cover equality and diversity and the need to ensure that contractual arrangements are accessible to small and medium sized enterprises and the voluntary sector. Potential contractors and suppliers are required to provide information on their approach to equality and diversity and evidence that they have relevant systems in place for legal compliance.

## 14. Publishing and monitoring results

Each service will develop Equality and Diversity Action Plans, which address the needs of communities, and the common issues which cut across them irrespective of age, race, disability, gender, religion and belief and sexual orientation. In this way, the equality and diversity agenda is being embedded systematically in our strategic and business planning processes. These plans will be monitored through the corporate performance framework.

### Measuring our approach to equality

The Council has developed a new Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) methodology. The EIA's examine how a policy, procedure or service may have an unequal impact on different groups of people. It will enable service managers to improve proposed or existing provision. An EIA is a way of deciding whether a policy or service has a positive, negative or neutral impact on some sections of society. It is also to be used to test future policies or services. The impacts enable us to take into account the needs of women, men or transgender people, black and ethnic minority groups, disabled people, people's religion or belief, sexual orientation or age. In order to ensure a consistent approach to equality impact assessments we have produced a toolkit for people who are responsible for carrying out these assessments.

The Chief Executives Department will be developing monitoring systems within the corporate performance framework which will monitor and manage the completion and outcomes of EIA's and ensure that they are improving services and meeting the needs of our communities. Where gaps and adverse impact are found through the equality impact assessment process, Service Equality and Diversity Action Plans will be developed and included in the annual service plans and work programmes. Where there is insufficient data available about the impact of the service on groups, the first stage will be to establish monitoring and feedback mechanisms to obtain it on a regular basis through the Council's performance framework.

## Equality performance

When mainstreaming equality and diversity and measuring outcomes, we must achieve real improvements. Each directorate is therefore required to develop Service Equality and Diversity Action Plans which demonstrate the following:

- evidence of measurable improvements in access for all under-represented groups;
- implementation of the requirements of equality related legislation; and
- evidence of measurable improvements in respect of providing services that meet the needs of all groups in the communities the directorate serves.

**DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION**

**Cheshire East Borough Council Single Equality Scheme 2010-2013**

**Appendix B**

**ACTION PLAN**

Cross-cutting Equality Priorities	Council Actions	Outcomes	Lead	Time	RACE	DISABILITY	GENDER	AGE	SEXUAL ORIENTATION	RELIGION & BELIEF
<b>1. Have a modern and diverse workforce</b>	<p>Ensure the council understands its local labour market, the barriers equality groups face and the impact this has on achieving a diverse workforce.</p> <p>Decide how to best monitor religion/belief sexual orientation</p> <p>Develop our understanding of how the Council responds to the needs of Transgender staff</p> <p>Develop our understanding of how the Council responds to the needs of LGB staff</p>	Evidence base which can be utilised in service planning and improvements, policy reviews and impact assessments and to identify/target training needs	<p>Melanie Henniker HR Delivery</p> <p>Julie Davies HR Strategy</p> <p>Mathew Hebden HR Organisational Development</p> <p>Rosie Ottewill Hr Organisational Development and Training</p>	June 2011						

	Develop a better understanding of why certain equality groups are less likely to apply for jobs within the Council.		Policy and Research Mgr							
	Ensure that all employment procedures comply with equality legislation and employment codes of practice	Monitoring systems where strand specific issues can be identified, assessed, actioned and logged.		Dec 2010						
	Refresh existing staff diversity information incorporating information on identifying Disability, Sexual Orientation Religion or Belief, Age, Carer status and Transgender	Evidence base in place to inform policy development and service planning in order that the Council can improve service delivery		Dec 2010						
	Collect data on the diversity of our workforce across different levels of seniority and apply action plans to address any identified disparities	The ability to map workforce dynamics as well as having the ability to define the workforce by cultural demographics		June 2011						
	Identify disparities of pay between men and women within the council. Action plan of activity to address disadvantage. Continue regular monitoring	Will have addressed any disparity of pay for men and women		July 2010						



	Promote the good gender equality practice within the Council									
	Review current procedures and develop a strategy to:	Appropriate targets for improving staff representation and profile in terms of equality at all levels within the organisation		June 2011						
	Increase % of BME Staff and into the top 5% of council earners									
	Increase % of staff who consider themselves disabled and into the top 5% of council earners									
	Increase % of women into the top 5% of council earners									
	Identify initiatives on how to increase the younger adult population into the council e.g. apprenticeships scheme work placements	Procedure in place that commits to equality of representation for certain groups that have historically been under-represented		June 2011						
	Understand the impact that the council is having in terms of up-skilling and addressing worklessness across different	A process that commits to equality of representation for certain groups that have been excluded		June 2011						



















	disadvantaged groups giving consideration to white families and communities at risk of socio-economic exclusion.	under-represented and/or disadvantaged with consideration to white families and communities at risk of socio-economic exclusion		Dec 2010						
	Complete the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index and implement actions that come from this	Benchmark against good practice in employment and sexual orientation. It will include clear actions for ensuring that our employment policies promote equality and sexual orientation								
	Ensure a range of inclusive structures are in place to engage and involve staff before priorities are set.	Central point information, data, and support tools are shared across the Council, with staff in order to achieve equality outcomes	Julie Davies HR Strategy  Policy and Research Mgr	Jan 2011						
	Develop a Council wide Learning and Development programme for equality and diversity	Equality and diversity training is embedded in the strategy for learning and development  Increase in knowledge and competency of equality and diversity at all levels  The Council delivers a range of learning and	Rosie Ottewill Hr Organisational Development and Training  Policy and Research Mgr							








		development interventions to support Councillors and officers to deliver equality outcomes									
	Develop a range of activities to ensure our workforce continues to incorporate equality and diversity into everything that we do:	The councils workforce increases its understanding of the core issues and principles set out in the councils equality agenda	Julie Davies HR Strategy  Policy and Research Mgr	Jan 2011	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Development of a single equality network if considered to be a feasible and useful role	Equality and Diversity group with clear remit represents councils functions with committed membership	Policy and Research Mgr	June 2011	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Raise the profile of carers and ensure that their specific requirements are considered and understood. e.g. flexible working	Monitoring systems where strand specific issues can be identified, assessed, actioned and logged.	Policy and Research Mgr	Jan 2011	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Promote and implement workplace policies which support carers in their caring role	A range of activities have been undertaken to ensure that our workplace practices continue to increase our understanding and support for carers both within the council and throughout Cheshire East	Julie Davies HR Strategy	Jan 2011	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Ensure equality and Diversity is embedded into the existing integrated appraisal tool	Integrated Appraisal Toolkit now includes social and economic inclusion to	Julie Davies HR Strategy	Dec 2010	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

	Ensure that equality and diversity questions are appropriate within current appraisal tools	ensure equality and diversity issues are embedded into our appraisal processes	Policy and Research Mgr							
	Develop equality and diversity training specific to the differing needs of people within the Council and as identified by staff themselves	<p>Equality and diversity training is embedded in the strategy for learning and development</p> <p>Increase in knowledge and competency of equality and diversity at all levels</p> <p>The Council delivers a range of learning and development interventions to support Councillors and officers to deliver equality outcomes</p>	Julie Davies HR Strategy Policy and Research Mgr	Ongoing						
	Develop stakeholder groups to assist in E.I.A	Stakeholder Groups are instrumental in the EIA process ensuring actions are driven forward and barriers to completion are resolved.	Service Mgr  Policy and Research Mgr	Jan 2011						
	Sustainable review and develop policy (stand alone or incorporated ) that reflects our commitment to eliminate harassment and bullying	All equality policies reflect the council's commitment to the elimination of harassment and bullying. Publications and other	Julie Davies HR Strategy  Policy and	Oct 2010						

		medias have also echoed this message.	Research Mgr							
	Deliver an employee consultation event on the Single Equality Scheme and Services	Evidence base in place to inform policy development and service planning in order that the Council can improve service delivery	Policy and Research Mgr	April 2010	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Monitor staff by equality group to ascertain representation of those recruited, trained, promoted, disciplined and those that leave the Council.	Provide evidence base in place to inform monitoring development in order that the Council can increase the diversity of the workforce and to comply with equality duties and legislation.	Julie Davies HR Strategy  Policy and Research Mgr	April 2011	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Cross-cutting Equality Priorities</b>	<b>Council Actions</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>RACE</b>	<b>DISABILITY</b>	<b>GENDER</b>	<b>AGE</b>	<b>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</b>	<b>RELIGION &amp; BELIEF</b>
<b>To foster community engagement and satisfaction</b>	Develop a community engagement strategy.  Attract and engage with Cheshire East communities to attend council events.  Consider the profile of those	We will have improved access to services by ensuring our communication and consultation procedures are accessible  Ability for all people in	Planning and Performance Mgr  Policy & Research Mgr	Dec 2010  March 2011	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

	<p>attending council events, who speaks at events and if there is under-representation.</p> <p>Develop equality and diversity communication to increase engagement.</p> <p>Ensure that local communities are consulted and/or engaged with appropriately about service planning and delivery. Invite all communities to participate in public consultation event to discuss and express their opinions</p> <p>Develop targeted marketing activities</p> <p>Single Equality Scheme prioritising EIAs and services</p> <p>Eradicating harassment bullying and hate crime</p>	<p>Cheshire East to engage with the council</p> <p>Improved access to services by providing information in clear language</p> <p>Evidence base which can be utilised in service planning and improvements, policy reviews and impact assessments and to identify any service short fall.</p> <p>Communicate to target groups that the council is listening.</p> <p>The Council will be providing leadership and influencing partners and delivery agencies to promote equality and diversity through the provision of excellent services and delivery</p>		<p>March 2011</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>							
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	<p>Ensure consultation Questionnaires are relevant to identifying short falls in service take up.</p> <p>Consider how to monitor the profile of equality and diversity in Cheshire East</p>	<p>Evidence base which can be utilised in service planning and improvements, policy reviews and impact assessments and to identify service needs</p>	<p>Service Mgrs</p> <p>Policy and Research Mgr</p>	<p>July 2010</p>						
	<p>Map all third sector/community groups who currently share working relationships with Cheshire East Council</p> <p>Work with the third and voluntary sectors and local communities to: Provide high-level strategic support and advice to the council on equality, diversity and inclusion issues</p> <p>Advise and inform the council on good practice models and to participate in the council's programmes and initiatives.</p>	<p>The council have a clear agenda with regards to reformulating and reinvigorating its relationships with the voluntary and community sectors</p> <p>The Council have demonstrated a commitment to promote equality through voluntary and community sector capacity building resulting in an expansion of knowledge and a shared understanding.</p>	<p>Partnership Mgr</p> <p>Juliet Blackburn</p>	<p>Dec 2010</p> <p>Ongoing</p>						
	<p>EIAs involve appropriate community and/or stakeholder groups and are made public</p>	<p>The Council have demonstrated a commitment to promote equality through voluntary</p>	<p>Service Mgr</p> <p>Policy and Research Mgr</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>						

		<p>and community sector capacity building resulting in an expansion of knowledge and a shared understanding.</p> <p>All EIA will be made available through Cheshire East's Intranet and website</p>									
	<p>Improve Gypsy/Travellers access to, and experiences of, services;</p> <p>develop and improve services so that services meet their needs;</p> <p>Break down service barriers by increasing understanding of their culture and issues they face; and</p> <p>Engage and involve Gypsy/Travellers and assess their needs</p> <p>Research with the community and voluntary sector the most appropriate ways of communicating with Gypsies</p>	<p>Gypsy and Travellers views and needs are taken into account at a strategic level</p> <p>Gypsies and Travellers have increased ability to access services including education and health, and leisure activities</p> <p>Service provision will be re-shaped to meet community need</p> <p>Service providers are aware of the size and location of the community</p> <p>Communication media assessed to best meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers e.g. website, easy read, face to face</p>		June 2011							



	and Travellers and the appropriate medium.									
	To develop a framework for translation, interpreting and formatting information and literature	Improved access to services by providing information in differing formats and languages consistently and cost effectively		May 2010						
	Produce a series of published research reports to help inform the activity of the council and its wider stakeholders	To support and improve our understanding of Cheshire East we have produced several reports.  We have initiated work on understanding the economic inclusion/participation all the diverse groups within our borough and their experiences regarding support and services	Partnership Mgr Juliet Blackburn	March 2011	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Arrange and promote a public consultation event on the Single Equality Scheme and the services the council provides.	Delivered the data collected contributed towards the final draft SES and 3 year Action Plan	Partnership Mgr Juliet Blackburn	May 2010	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Include carers as key stakeholders in the development of relevant policies	Carers are represented via equality and support groups that contribute to the decision making process of relevant policies, procedures and	Partnership Mgr Juliet Blackburn	Ongoing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

		services								
	The council to recognise the diversity of carers and design services around individual carer needs and to influence and support community care service providers and support organisations	<p>We have initiated work on understanding the social-economic inclusion and/or exclusion of carers.</p> <p>We will be able to understand the carers who are not benefiting from accessing programmes projects and enable us to addresses any gaps identified</p>	Partnership Mgr Juliet Blackburn	Ongoing						
	Explore with partners the sharing of resources and to under take consultation with the community	Central point information, data, and support tools are shared across the Council, with partners and communities of interest in order to achieve equality outcomes	Partnership Mgr Juliet Blackburn	Ongoing						
<b>Cross-cutting Equality Priorities</b>	<b>Council Actions</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>RACE</b>	<b>DISABILITY</b>	<b>GENDER</b>	<b>AGE</b>	<b>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</b>	<b>RELIGION &amp; BELIEF</b>
<b>To have responsive services and excellent</b>	Support Services to develop equality and diversity action plans leading to mainstreaming equality within	Systems are in place at corporate and service level to ensure the delivery, review and monitoring of	Service Mgrs  Policy and Research Mgr	Ongoing						

<b>customer care</b>	service and business plans	the Council's services, procedures and equality agenda								
	Conduct EIA screening on all the policies practices and procedures and where required carry out full EIA's	The council has conducted a complete equality assessment screening process of all activities within the council which as resulted in full impact assessments. This as driven down equality issues and created a greater awareness and systematic need to change	Service Mgrs Policy and Research Mgr	June 2011						
	Ensure all future policies, practices and procedures undergo appropriate and proportionate EIA e.g. All will require EIA screening and where appropriate or adverse impact identified a full impact assessment	The council now has a much more developed approach towards the EIA process. All future activities going forward now have EIA screening and where appropriate full impact assessments are carried out, This means we are able to identify and provide mitigation for potential adverse impacts and use the process to improve the development and delivery of policies, procedures and services.	Service Mgrs Policy and Research Mgr	Ongoing						
	Develop and agree a strategy to monitor actions and to	Systems are in place at corporate and service level	Service Mgrs	June 2010						

	report on outcomes	to ensure the delivery, review and monitoring of the Council's services, procedures and equality agenda								
	Provide accurate and timely and accessible information about supports and services for carers throughout the different stages of caring	We have initiated work to understand the social-economic challenges faced by this particular group and produced a variety of information media, publications, consultations and events outlining actions the council are taking to address gaps and understand how to best support this group through its services.		Ongoing						
	Website development where shared partner information is accessible through a hosted Joint Strategy Needs Assessment website.	Central point information, data, and support tools are shared across the Council, with partners and communities of interest in order to achieve equality outcomes		Dec 2010						
	Review current performance management systems  Measure equality outcomes against current service performance with emphasis on areas of possible exclusion or	Systems are in place at corporate and service level to ensure the delivery, review and monitoring of the Council's performance management procedures against the equality		March 2011						

	engagement of certain groups within Cheshire East	agenda								
	Develop ways of signposting Gypsies and Travellers to key supportive services, for example maternity and mental health services.	Gypsies and Travellers have a mechanism for having an influential voice and have increased ownership of services		Jun 2011						
<b>Cross-cutting Equality Priorities</b>	<b>Council Actions</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>RACE</b>	<b>DISABILITY</b>	<b>GENDER</b>	<b>AGE</b>	<b>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</b>	<b>RELIGION &amp; BELIEF</b>
<b>To understand and know our community</b>	Increase the awareness the Council has in understanding the reason for gaps in the data/intelligence	Evidence base in place to inform policy development and service planning in order that the Council can improve service delivery The ability to map communities of interest and need as well as having the ability to define communities by geography	Service Mgrs  Policy and Research Mgr	June 2011						
	Raise the profile of carers within the council and Cheshire East	Clear actions for ensuring that our employment policies promote equality for carers.  Carers are represented	Service Mgrs  Policy and Research Mgr	Dec 2010						

		within the equality groups, and networks that assist in the councils decision making processes.									
	Plans to gather evidence on the profile of the councils communities, the extent of inequality and disadvantage within these communities and to identify priorities across the council	The ability to map communities of interest and need as well as having the ability to define communities by geography  To commit resources to identified actions that will deliver positive outcomes to disadvantaged groups	Policy and Research Mgr	June 2011							
	Publish a series of research reports to help inform the activity of the council and its wider stakeholders	A planned programme of research is developed to identifying short falls in service development and/or delivery	Service Mgrs Policy and Research Mgr	June 2011							
	Review existing equality and diversity research to ascertain gaps in knowledge and initiate a planned programme of research to help fill any identified gaps	The council has an understanding of gaps in its knowledge The council is better aware of how equality and diversity impacts on Cheshire East	Policy and Research Mgr	Aug 2010							
	Improve the Councils knowledge of the boroughs diversity so that it informs and improves our work	Evidence base in place to inform policy development and service planning in order that the Council can improve service delivery	Service Mgrs Policy and Research Mgr	June 2011							

		The ability to map communities of interest and need as well as having the ability to define communities by geography									
	Map other disadvantaged groups develop an understanding that some white individuals, families and communities are at risk of disadvantage	A possible mechanism to identify social isolation and vulnerable groups and to look at the actual experience of people in their communities	Service Mgrs  Policy and Research Mgr	June 2011							
	Consider commissioning a quality of Life and wellbeing Survey of Cheshire East	Evidence base in place to inform policy development and service planning in order that the Council can improve service delivery The ability to map communities of interest and need as well as having the ability to define communities by geography	Policy and Research Mgr	June 2011							
	Increase the awareness the Council has in understanding of the reason for gaps in the data/intelligence	Evidence base in place to inform policy development and service planning in order that the Council can improve service delivery	Policy and Research Mgr	June 2011							
	Ensure the council involves and consults with vulnerable and marginalised groups to	A possible mechanism to identify social isolation and vulnerable groups and to	Policy and Research Mgr	June 2011							



















	ensure their views are taken account of	look at the actual experience of people in their communities								
	Develop Internal, external and partnership communication strategies that are designed to promote good relations across all local communities	The Council and partners will be demonstrating a commitment to promote equality through contracts, commissioning and partnership working arrangements	Policy and Research Mgr	Dec 2011						
<b>Cross-cutting Equality Priorities</b>	<b>Council Actions</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>RACE</b>	<b>DISABILITY</b>	<b>GENDER</b>	<b>AGE</b>	<b>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</b>	<b>RELIGION &amp; BELIEF</b>
<b>To embed and promote equality within our Partnerships. Procurement and Commissioning</b>	Website development where shared partner info is accessible through a hosted Joint Strategy Needs Assessment website	Central point information, data, and support tools are shared across the Council, with partners and communities of interest in order to achieve equality outcomes	Policy & Research Mgr	March 2010						
	Consult with Cheshire, Halton, Warrington Single Equality group	The Council and partners will be demonstrating a commitment to promote equality through contracts, commissioning and partnership working	Policy & Research Mgr	Ongoing						



		arrangements								
	Establish the Equality and Diversity structure within the council with responsibility for monitoring and reviewing any issue arising out of the equality agenda	Systems are in place at corporate and service level to ensure the delivery, review and monitoring of the Council's equality agenda	Service Mgrs	June 2010	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Complete EFLG "Achieving Level Actions"	Council equality indicators agreed and embedded within the Council's performance framework	Service Mgrs	Nov 2012	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Develop a sustainable procurement policy ensuring equality and diversity is reflected in policy and contractual agreements.  Encourage and develop a more diverse supplier base.  Ensure that procurement procedures and documents practice equality and diversity	The Council and partners will be demonstrating a commitment to promote equality through contracts, commissioning and partnership working arrangements	Procurement/ Commissioning Mgr David Wharton	March 2011	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Appropriate mechanisms are in place to ensure that human rights considerations are identified when planning services.	The council have ensured that human rights issues have been considered with regards to assessing and amending policies,	Service Mgrs  Policy & Research Mgr	Nov 2012	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

		practices and services								
	All commissioning and procurement processes take account of equality issues. Contracts include a requirement to deliver an effective and appropriate service fairly and equitably.	Reassurance that the council is working with businesses that align with its own values  Ensure that the council benefits from engaging and working with all businesses	Procurement/ Commissioning Mgr David Wharton	March 2011						
<b>Cross-cutting Equality Priorities</b>	<b>Council Actions</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>RACE</b>	<b>DISABILITY</b>	<b>GENDER</b>	<b>AGE</b>	<b>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</b>	<b>RELIGION &amp; BELIEF</b>
<b>To have an effective performance framework and demonstrate continuous improvement and leadership</b>	Identify individuals responsible within Directorates for progress on the SES and taking action forward	The Council will be providing leadership and influencing partners to promote equality and diversity through the provision of excellent services and delivery	Head of Policy and Performance  Policy and Research Mgr	July 2010						
	Establish Equality champions group that has a clear remit; represents all council functions and understands community aspirations and has a committed membership focused on supporting the	Equality Champions are confident, skilled and fully understand the complexities and issues that the role entails	Head of Policy and Performance  Policy and Research Mgr	Oct 2010						

	council's equality agenda.									
	A prioritised programme of Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) is in place. All Council policies, strategies' and procedures to be impact assessed on an ongoing basis and published	Systems are in place at corporate and service level to ensure the delivery, review and monitoring of EIAs the Council's core policies procedures and services.	Head of Policy and Performance  Policy and Research Mgr	July 2010						
	Support equality champions and Managers in the production of equality action plans, EIAs and mainstreaming equality through each service.	Appropriate training and briefings identified and delivered to equality champions	Head of Policy and Performance  Policy and Research Mgr	June 2010	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	To become an "Achieving Council" under the framework with areas of excellence within the next 3 years  Arrange to Self Assessment of EFLG "Achieving Standard" against delivered outcomes  Arrange for Peer Assessment of EFLG "Achieving Standard" against delivered outcomes	The Council will fully understand where it is in relation to equality and diversity and compliance with the EFLG, the CAA Framework and compliance with equality legislation. This information will enable the Council to identify areas of focus and improvement. This information will also enable the Council to benchmark and monitor/measure improvements effectively	Policy and Research Mgr	Nov 2012						

	Ensure Leader, portfolio holder (Performance & Capacity) chief executive and partners commit publicly to improving equality outcomes and can tell the equality story for their community	The Council will be providing leadership and influencing partners to promote equality and diversity through the provision of excellent services and delivery	Head of Policy and Performance  Policy and Research Mgr	Nov 2010						
	Develop sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement and other partnership strategies and working arrangements. Local Strategic partnership Strategies have been reviewed with the voluntary and community sector and the community to deliver locally identified equality outcomes.	The Council and partners will be demonstrating a commitment to promote equality through policies and services, commissioning and partnership working arrangements with the voluntary and community sectors.	Head of Policy and Performance  Policy and Research Mgr	Ongoing						
	Corporate and service level structures are in place to ensure delivery and review of the equalities agenda	Equality and diversity has a higher positive profile within the council who meet their statutory responsibilities as well as incorporating good practice Equality models	Head of Policy and Performance  Policy and Research Mgr	July 2010						



## **Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit**

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## 1. Purpose of this toolkit

This toolkit has been developed to help you place equality and diversity at the centre of your day-to-day thinking at work. It will help you assess the likely and actual impact of policies & practices on different sectors of the community and target action where it is needed most. If used effectively, this should help to put right inequalities, increase public confidence and serve all sections of the community according to their circumstances and needs.

Every member of the organisation involved in policy making or implementation, will be expected to take account of equality issues and expected to follow the guidance in impact assessing policies and report results as appropriate.

The guidance will be reviewed regularly in order that we can develop and improve it as experience is gained, therefore, if you have any queries for suggestions on how we can improve this guidance please contact:

Carol Haydon  
01270 685867  
[Carol.haydon@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:Carol.haydon@cheshireeast.gov.uk)



## 2. What do we mean when we talk about equality and diversity?

Equality is about respect and not treating an individual or group of people unfairly. It is about giving people an equality of opportunity to access services and to fulfil their potential. Equality is therefore based on the idea of fairness while recognising everyone is different.

Diversity is about all the ways in which people differ and about recognising that differences are a natural part of society.

People are not the same and this means that many different elements make up our local community – something which should be celebrated. Diversity is about treating people as individuals and making them feel respected and valued. Many myths exist about equality and diversity - it's not about political correctness or about giving people unfair advantages, but about respect for individuals and groups.

## 3. What do we mean by “strands” of equality?

RACE	Race includes issues such as ethnic origin, race and colour. It means that for example language barriers are a race issue and that of certain groups such as gypsies/travellers/show people are protected under the heading of race. This would also include disadvantaged white people.
DISABILITY	A person with a disability is someone with a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities. Examples include long term illnesses including cancer, diabetes, multiple sclerosis and heart conditions; hearing or sight impairments, or a significant mobility difficulty; and mental health conditions or learning difficulties. People in these circumstances and some others (such as people with facial disfigurement) have rights under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) to protect them from discrimination.
GENDER	Gender includes men, women (Transgender see sexual orientation). Gender has traditionally been seen to be about women's rights – this is now not the case. Gender issues may include things like maternity, adoption and paternity rights, and pay gap issues among other things.
AGE	Age includes everyone, however; specific focus may be centred on children, young people and older people's needs.
RELIGION & BELIEF	It is unlawful to discriminate against people because of religion or similar belief. Religion or belief is defined as being any religion, religious belief. This does not include any philosophical or political belief unless it is similar to religious belief.
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	Under the law you shouldn't be discriminated against because of your sexual orientation or “perceived” sexual orientation – including orientation towards someone of the same sex (lesbian/gay), opposite sex (heterosexual) both sexes (bisexual) or possible change in orientation due to gender reassignment.
CARERS	Carers may be as young as 7 or 8 years, looking after a disabled parent or other siblings. Carers can be older people themselves, perhaps in their 80's looking after a partner or friend of similar age. Carers come from diverse cultural and religious communities. Carers live in diverse geographical areas, from urban tower blocks to remote rural areas. Carers have diverse relationships; they may be heterosexual, gay or lesbian or transgender. Anyone looking after a person with an illness or disability, whatever their situation, is considered a carer with equality rights to help, support, information and services



#### 4. What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?

An equality impact assessment (EIA) is a way to make sure individuals and teams think carefully about the likely impact of policies or procedures, strategies, functions and services, to identify any unmet needs, and to provide a basis for action to improve services where appropriate.

It systematically assesses and records the actual, potential or likely impact of a service, policy or project – or a significant change in a service, policy or project - on different groups of people.

This toolkit goes further than identifying the impact of policies, services and procedures. It also assesses whether people's needs are being met and if the legislative requirements are being met.

All managers and project leaders are responsible for incorporating equalities into their projects, plans or strategies and for assessing the equality impact. This should be a continuous process, starting at the very beginning of the project.

#### 5. Nine steps to take when carrying out Equality Impact Assessments

1. Identify the purpose and aims of the policy, service or function or any proposals being made
2. Consider any information, data or research that is already available in relation to equalities and what this tells you
3. Make an assessment of the impact or effects on different Communities

4. Consider whether there is anything which could be done to remove any adverse impact or effects, or to further promote equality, social inclusion or community cohesion
5. Consult those affected for their views and ideas
6. Identify any change and/or decide whether or not to go ahead with your policy, procedures, proposals, or changes to services
7. Decide how you will monitor and review your policy, proposals or other changes
8. Where necessary, add the main objectives from your impact assessment to your service plan, action plan etc
9. Write up your assessment and publish it on the council's website via the Corporate Equality Team.

#### 6. Why are we doing Impact Assessments?

Local Authorities have a legal responsibility under Race, Gender Disability Equality Duties to assess both their existing and new policies and functions, and to set out how they will monitor any possible negative impact on disability/gender and race equality.

They also have to consult on proposed policies and train their staff about this law, and have a positive duty to promote good relations between communities.

In addition, Cheshire East Council will be working towards the Equality Framework for Local Government which will require the authority to impact assess for race gender and disability, and demonstrate commitment to addressing the needs of and impact assessing around sexual orientation, age, and religion and belief.

**Failure to assess the likely impact of new or ongoing work could lead to legal challenge as well as the inability of services to provide care for those who need it most.**

## **6.1 Legislation Timetable**

Legislative framework is set out in Appendix 1

## **6.2 Going further than the legislation – the moral and business case**

There are many additional aspects to the impact assessment process. As well as it being the right thing to do for moral reasons, there is a clear business case for mainstreaming equality.

A business that is seen to be putting the principles of equality and diversity into practice, both in the workforce and in the products and services it offers to customers, is more likely to project a positive public image in the community

(Business Case for Diversity, Women & Equality Unit, DTI).

**Organisations with a diverse workforce are likely to:** better reflect and understand the community it serves provide a better, more tailored service to meet individual needs.

**Reduction in discrimination and unfair treatment can lead to:** a positive knock-on effect on grievances and relations in general within the organisation

reduced absenteeism  
enhanced employees' attachment to the organisation  
reduced labour turnover  
increased labour productivity.

The impact assessment process also has potential effects on:  
Public perception of the Council  
Inspection and audit scorings

## **7. Equality Impact Assessment process**

### **7.1 Initial Screening & Full EIAs**

Initial screening involves a process of identifying and prioritising what policies, procedures or strategies will be assessed, then scoping their potential impact on service users, employers or communities.

Initial screening should be carried out at the initial planning and development stages of the project, strategy or policy development. This section should be completed before the approval process is finalised.

Some large projects will be made up of many different activities, some of which are in themselves projects. As part of the screening, these activities should be listed and if any of them are projects in themselves, the project lead should consider whether they need to undergo a separate EIA screening.

## 7.2 ‘Dos’ and ‘don’ts’ for the EIA process

Do	Don't
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Do treat the exercise as a challenge.</li> <li>•Do build contracts and relationships with colleagues in other departments and even from other councils, to assist and challenge the process.</li> <li>•Do involve the right people.</li> <li>•Do use plain English.</li> <li>•Do build in specific tasks and topics for individuals to share information, progress and so on, with a timetable and targets.</li> <li>•Do focus on finding real improvements in your service, procedures or policies rather than trying to get the form completed and off the desk</li> <li>•Do know your customers their needs the barriers they face and focus on improving the service they receive.</li> <li>•Do make sure you have enough information to assess all the strands and where possible break data down into individual groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Don't even think about the impact assessment form and/or template until the end of the assessment.</li> <li>•Don't treat as a form filling exercise; think of it as the final audit trail of a service improvement ex think of it as the final audit trail of a service improvement exercise.</li> <li>•Don't panic</li> <li>•Don't try to complete the EIA on your own.</li> <li>•Don't be daunted by the consultation element. Find out if the research or data already exists or consult directly with the representatives of relevant groups or specialist organisations</li> <li>•Don't use the process as a last minute check. Develop plans that include time to make changes to a project, strategy or policy as identified by the EIA</li> <li>•Don't focus on race faith; look at the demographics in your area. There may be issues such as age or sexuality that are important in the wider community</li> <li>•Don't put it off – do a little at a time and it won't seem an overwhelming task.</li> </ul>

## 7.3 Tips and general guidance

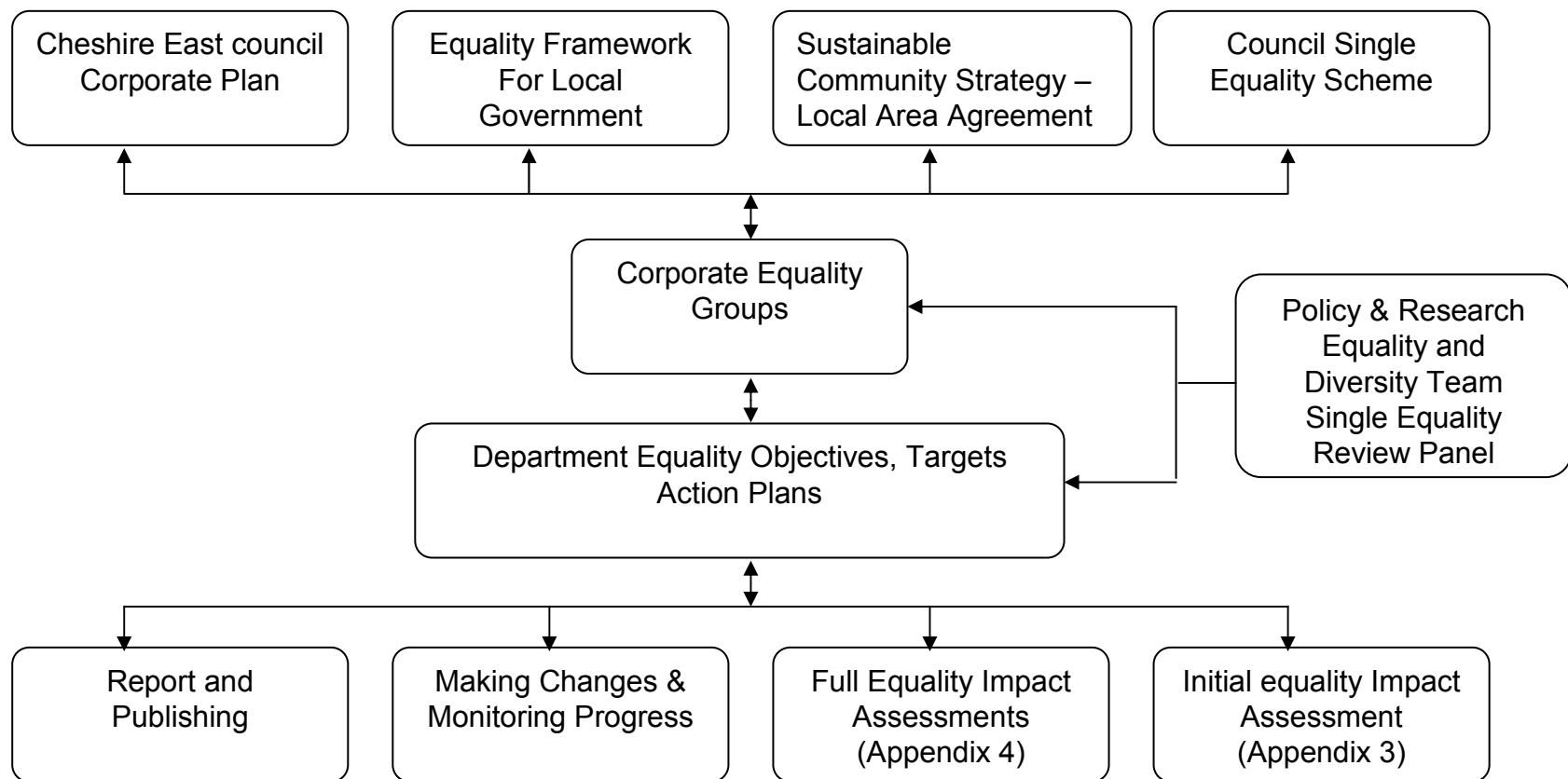
Equality Impact Assessments are designed to be a challenging process, but they are not intended to be over complicated or about 'getting it right'. It is not an exact science and Managers should take a common sense approach

- Managers need to be prepared for changes to the policy, procedure or function that the EIA identifies as necessary. It should not be a last minute check.
- The aim should be to try to take the perspective of some one outside of the council, such as a potential beneficiary or user, when carrying out an EIA.

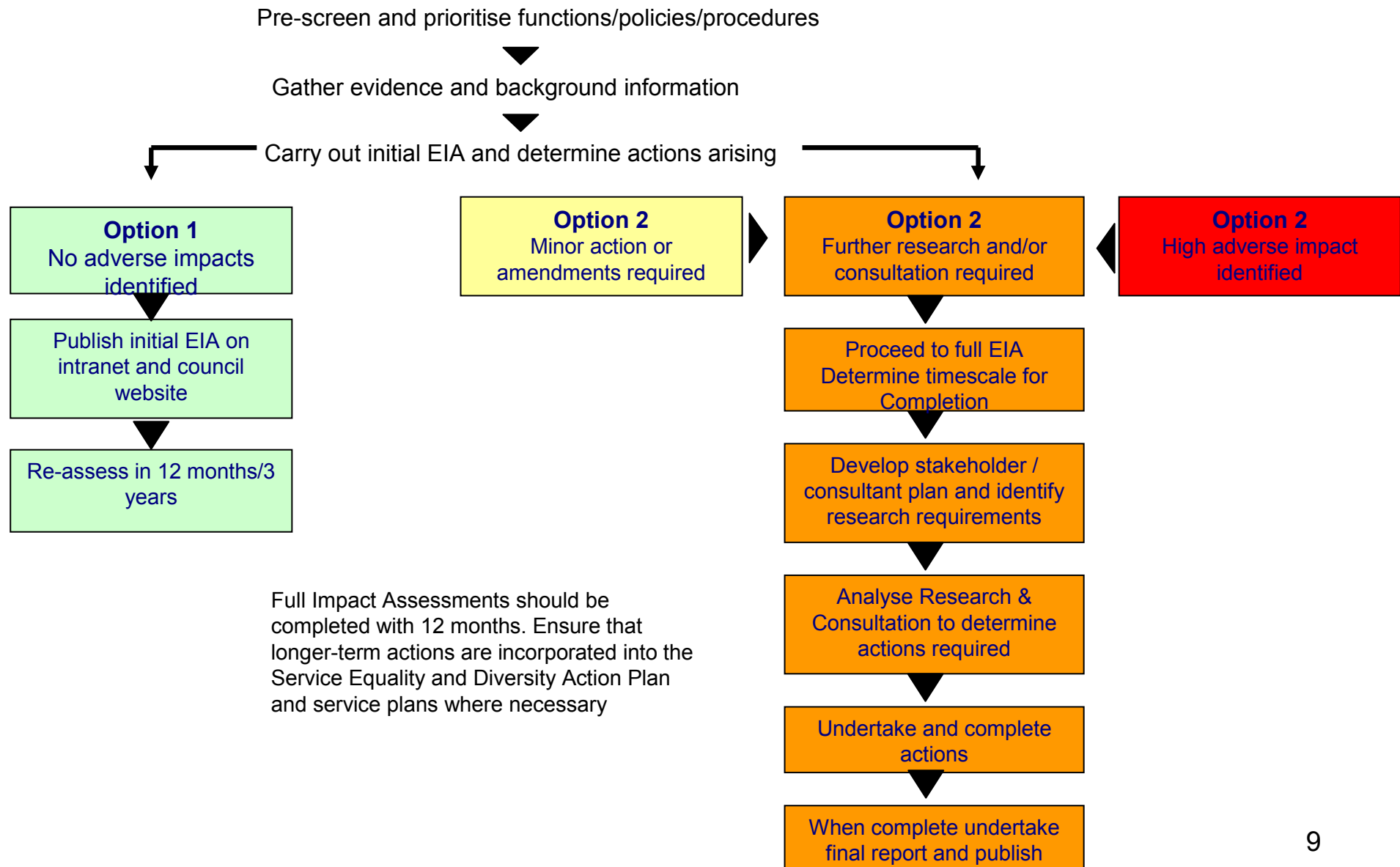
## 7.4 Corporate Overview of the Process

Once stage one has been completed, the policy, procedure or function is only required to go through the second stage (Full Equality Impact Assessment – EIA) if:

- any equality group or sub section of an equality group would be adversely affected, or
- if there is insufficient information or data to determine whether there is an impact



## 7.5 Equality Impact Assessment Flow Chart



The form does not need to be completed by one person in isolation. Neither does the EIA form require completion all in one go.

Completing the form is similar to doing a risk assessment. It involves predicting and assessing what the implications of a policy, procedure or function will be on a wide range of people with different and varied needs. This can be a difficult thing to do and it is not intended that Managers complete the form without the support and advice of others. Completing the form with a colleague or critical friend, who can provide a different perspective, will help.

Do not spend too long on the initial screening. At the screening stage, the council is trying to assess obvious negative or positive impacts or, importantly, gaps in our knowledge about likely impact.

The screening should make full use of the following:

- professional knowledge of the issue and/or personal experience
- previous consultation results
- analysis of previous complaints, comments, evaluations and monitoring
- research and reports
- library searches
- internet searches
- advice from internal and external specialists
- staff with previous involvement of direct implementation of a similar policy, procedure or function

It is particularly important that Managers realise they have legal duties to assess the impact of policies, procedures and functions.

If the likely impact on the different equality target groups is not known, then action is needed to acquire that information, this may result in the policy, procedure or function going forward for a Full Equality Impact assessment (EIA).

The best way to find out if a policy or project is likely to impact negatively or positively on equality target groups is to find out if research or data already exists or to directly consult representatives of those groups or relevant specialist organisations.

Following the completion of an EIA, an action plan is required to outline any changes required to mitigate against any adverse impacts.

## 8. Partnership projects

The Council aims to be an exemplary organisation in relation to equality and to champion equality across Cheshire East. The statutory requirements to assess the impact of policies and functions apply to partnerships and contractual relationships.

The EIA procedures apply to all projects and policies where the Council is the lead agency in a multi-agency project or a key delivery partner. The council is the lead agency if the project or policy was initiated by the council and the monitoring, evaluation and strategic overview of the implementation lies with the council, even if the council is not the operational lead.

On joint projects and initiatives where the council is not the lead organisation, the council representatives should raise the issue of the need to carry out an equalities assessment in order to comply with the legislation. The council should carry out an EIA screening before deciding to participate in the partnership project or initiative.

## 9. How will compliance and progress be measured?

The Council is committed to principles laid out in the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG). The EFLG provides us with a framework to measure progress against equality objectives. A key part of progressing through the Equality Framework involves carrying out equality impact assessments on existing and new policies, procedures and functions.

## 10. Whose responsibility is it to complete the impact assessment process?

Everyone who works within the Council has a responsibility to adhere to the principles of equality and diversity. This means that every manager, policy writer, policy implementer, project manager and event organiser must consider the practical and implied issues that may arise for people. It's strongly recommended that you do not undertake an EIA on your own, and a 'critical friend' approach is often useful.

## 11. Data Collection

Data is vital to give us an understanding both of the numbers and groups of people affected by the Council's service provision. While we may have a feeling that there may be some kind of impact, for the impact assessment process, it is necessary to back up our beliefs with factual information. If we want to find out if a policy is likely to impact negatively or positively on sections of the community we should first discover if data or research already exists. It is important to consider both qualitative and quantitative data – qualitative data is obtained through opinions / perceptions / experience of service users and providers, while quantitative data is about facts and figures.

Data collection plays an important role in the initial impact assessment. Indeed it may be identified that no data exists to back up a theory about a policy so a logical action from the initial impact assessment would be to put an effective monitoring system in place for the policy.

Useful information sources include:

- complaints & comments
- service user profiles/stats
- customer satisfaction surveys
- results of previous consultations/focus groups/surveys
- inspectorate and review reports
- front line employee's comments
- issues raised with or by elected Members
- staff surveys
- other local authorities and public service providers
- partner organisations and stakeholder forums
- library/internet searches

## 12. Consultation

Consultation is one of the key elements to carrying out a meaningful impact assessment. Full scale consultation is essential should a policy proceed to a full impact assessment. It is imperative to hear the views of all sections of the community which may be affected by policies. It is especially important to consult with groups which you believe may suffer a potentially negative impact. Different methods of consulting are more effective for some groups than others and consideration needs to be given as to when and where consultation will take place. For further advice regarding consultation methods or tools, please contact the Equality and Diversity Team.



## Appendix 1 – Terminology explained and further tips

Intended impacts	These are the objectives and desired outcomes of your policies. You must consider how these will affect different sectors of the community.
Unintended impacts	These are any “institutional” barriers, acts or omissions that could have a detrimental effect for certain sections of the community. e.g. barriers to prevent off road motor bike access to green spaces may impede access for some wheelchair users and people with pushchairs.
Negative impacts	Where you identify any potential for negative impact, you should consider making changes. If the negative impact would amount to unlawful discrimination you must make changes to your proposal unless there is an objective, lawful reason to justify it.
Positive impacts	This means positive impacts which could benefit a particular group in terms of equality, e.g. our recruitment and selection guidance states that we will interview all disabled job applicants who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy.
Promotion of equality	Promoting equality will improve both the quality and equality of Council policies and practice.
Promotion of good community relations	Making clear your plans and aims means that all decisions are open and transparent and accountable to all the communities within Cornwall.

### **Race Relations Amendment Act 2000**

Places a statutory duty on all public bodies to promote equal opportunity, eliminate racial discrimination and promote good relations between different racial groups.

### **Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulation 2003**

Introduced new definitions of indirect discrimination and harassment, new burden of proof requirements, continuing protection after employment ceases, new exemption for a determinate job requirement and the removal of certain other exemptions.

### **Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006**

The Act seeks to stop people from intentionally using threatening words or behaviour to stir up hatred against somebody because of what they believe.

### **Sex Discrimination Act 1975**

The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of sex. Sex discrimination is unlawful in employment, education, advertising or when providing housing, goods, services or facilities. It is unlawful to discriminate because someone is married, in employment or advertisements for jobs.

Groups at risk of discrimination, unfavourable treatment or social exclusion includes:

people who are male, female or member of the transgender community  
 people of all racial or ethnic backgrounds including people who use languages other than English and members of the travelling community  
 people of all religions or beliefs including those who do not have a religion or belief  
 people living with a disability, or people caring for people with a disability  
 people of all sexual orientations  
 people of all ages  
 Carers  
 white families from poor areas  
 people who face social exclusion - i.e. ex-offenders and homeless



STRAND	Possible groups affected	Issues to consider
RACE	Black and ethnic minority, disadvantaged white communities and individuals. Traveller, Gypsy and Show people	Respecting and reflecting diverse cultures, lifestyles, customs and values. For men, women, boys and girls (e.g. single sex provision). Communication formats, language needs translation. Isolation, work pattern of ethnic minority businesses. Economic and social mobility
DISABILITY	Mobility, sight, hearing, speech and language disability or difficulty, learning difficulties, mental health, long term illness	Accessibility of formats & communication, e.g. Braille, audiotape, induction loop, sign. Physical and sensory access including transport, environment. Giving enough time, removing barriers that cause the 'disability' (social model)
GENDER	Male Female (for transgender see sexual orientation)	Women as predominantly main carer, physical access (pushchairs & toddlers, single parents, caring costs/facilities/restrictions on time re caring. Underachievement or under-representation, balance on groups/working parties/community representation
AGE	Children, young people, teenagers, older people, retired people	Assumptions about age against experience and capability. Teenage parents, children as carers. Communication formats need to be adapted to age as appropriate.
RELIGION & BELIEF	Various faith communities, atheists etc.	Respecting and reflecting diverse cultures, lifestyles, customs & values
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	Lesbian, gay, bisexual , heterosexual or transgender	Assumptions about partners or family types, invisibility, dignity.
CARERS	Race –Disability – Gender – Age Region & Belief – Sexual Orientation	Anyone looking after a person with an illness or disability, whatever their situation, is considered a carer with equality rights to help, support, information and services.

## Appendix 2 – Initial EIA Form Template (Screening)

Department	( )	<b>Initial EIA Form Template (Screening)</b>					
Section	( )	Officer responsible for the Assessment		( )			
Name of Policy Procedure function being assessed	( )	Date of assessment	( )	Is this a new or existing policy	<b>Yes No</b>		
If there are any other policies or procedures associated or linked with this one, please note them here							
Briefly describe the aims, objectives and outcomes of the policy / procedure / function							
Who is intended to benefit from this policy – procedure - function							
What factors could contribute to or detract from the outcomes							
Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy – procedure- function? Please consider key equality groups							
Who is responsible for the policy – procedure – function?							

Racial equality - Is there an impact?	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	Comments
Gender Equality - Is there an impact?	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	Comments
Disability Equality - Is there an impact?	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	Comments
Sexual Orientation Equality - Is there an impact?	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	Comments
Age Equality - Is there an impact?	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	Comments
Religion and Belief Equality - Is there an impact?	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	Comments
Other disadvantaged groups (carers, white families from poor areas).	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	Comments
Please give details of any other potential impacts of this policy (i.e. Poverty & deprivation, community cohesion, environmental)	Details		
Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination relating to any Equality Duties	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	Comments
Does this policy – procedure – function have any effect on good relations between the council and the community	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	Comments
Should the policy – procedure – function proceed to a full equality impact assessment	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	Comments
If you are not proceeding to a full EIA make sure you have evidence to justify this decision should it be challenged. Please state the date the policy/procedure/function will be reassessed	Details		

Signed (Operational Service Manager) .....

Date.....

Signed ( Service Manager) .....

Date.....

Once you have completed your Initial Screening Form please email it to the Equality and Diversity Team. The Equality and Diversity Team will convene a quarterly meeting of the Single Equality Scheme Review Panel (internal and external representatives) who will quality check our Initial Screening Forms to ensure we have considered everyone.

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We plan to send approximately 10% of our completed Initial Screening Forms to the Panel

### Appendix 3 – Full Equality Impact Assessment Template (EIA)

This form should be accompanied by the completed Initial Equality Impact Assessment Form, and be used to plan for the completion of an EIA.

Department	( )	<b>Full Equality Impact Assessment Template (EIA)</b>				
Section	( )	Officer responsible for the Assessment	( )			
Name of Policy Procedure function being assessed	( )	Date of assessment	( )	Is this a new or existing policy	<b>Yes/No</b>	
Start date of EIA				Expected completion date		
Please specify what the question (s) /issue (s) will be for this full EIA (based on those identified in the initial EIA)						
Please indicate what research, information and intelligence may be required						
	Internal (Staff/Members)			External (stakeholders/service users/partners)		
Please state who will be involved/engaged/consulted						
	Internal (Staff/Members)			External (stakeholders/service users/partners)		
Please state what methods will be used to involve / engage and consult						
Please indicate expected costs& resource requirements for completing the EIA						

Once you have completed your EIA please email it to the Equality and Diversity Team. The Equality and Diversity Team will convene a quarterly meeting of the Single Equality Scheme Review Panel (internal and external representatives) who will quality check our EIA's to ensure we have considered everyone. We plan to send approximately 10% of our completed EIAs Forms to the Panel

## Appendix 4 - Developing Your Action Plan & Making Changes Template

Having completed stages one and two of your Equalities Impact Assessment, you are likely to have identified a number of areas where improvements could be made. The action plan will:

1. Outline what you are doing and how you are going to do it - developing your Action Plan
2. Measures progress towards implementation (you should complete this on a quarterly basis)
3. Measure the impact of the changes you have made or to set a benchmark that can be measured against future assessments.

### Developing the Action Plan

The first step is to draw up your action plan. The following explains what needs to go into each of the boxes:

Completing the Action Plan

<b>Ref:</b>	Single Equality Scheme, Equality Framework for Local Government
<b>Action:</b>	Issues arising from the EIA requiring a form of intervention to address disparities in service/function
<b>Responsible Persons</b>	Those member/s of your team who will be responsible for making these changes.
<b>Action Deadline:</b>	The date by which the action will be completed. This should be realistic and achievable.
<b>Tasks</b>	The changes that you propose to make to address the issues that you have identified
<b>Progress</b>	Monitor progress both positive and problematic identifying any potential barriers that may hinder completion e.g. Time, Internal or External factors,

Equalities Impact Assessment Action plan: Making Changes					
REF	Action	Responsible Person/s	Action Deadline	Tasks	Progress

Once the Action Plan is complete, please e-mail it to the Equality and Diversity Team. You now simply have to begin the work of making the changes you have identified.

### Quarterly EIA Progress Report

Having drawn up your Action Plan, it is important to monitor progress in implementing the different actions. Please complete the following progress report. This will help to ensure that you keep to the time-scales you have outlined and to seek advice from the Equality and Diversity Team where you are experiencing problems with implementation of particular actions. (simply cut and paste information from the Action Plan)

REF	Action	Progress	Completed

Once you have completed your progress report, please return it to the Equality and Diversity Team. You will receive/complete a further progress report template in three months time.

Appendix 5 Equalities Impact Assessment - Monitoring Impact Report

Having implemented each of the tasks outlined within your Action Plan, it is important that you measure the impact of these changes to see whether they have improved the accessibility of your policy and/or service.  
Completing your Monitoring Impact Report

- Action - The changes that you have made to remove the gaps you have Identified (simply cut and paste these from the action plan).
- Impact - What has been the overall impact of making the particular changes? Could include wider community involvement in policy development or greater use of service by diverse communities.
- Outcomes - What are the concrete results of having changed your policy or service? Could include improved service use, reductions in complaints or increased satisfaction. These will be based on detailed data and should outline how the changes have brought about improvements for different communities and groups.

Ref	Action	Impact	Outcome	Review Date

Once you have completed your impact report, please return it to the Equality and Diversity Team. The Equality and Diversity Team will prepare an annual report for Corporate Management Team and Cabinet on our progress against our EIA's and action plans.

## Appendix 6 – Example of an EIA

Department	Finance	<b>Initial EIA Form Template (Screening)</b>					
EIA Ref number	( )	Officer responsible for the Assessment	( )				
Name of Policy Procedure function being assessed	Housing Benefits	Date of assessment	01/01/2010	Is this a new or existing policy	<b>Yes</b>		
If there are any other policies or procedures associated or linked with this one, please note them here		Council Tax – Appeals – Discretionary Housing Payments					
Briefly describe the aims, objectives and outcomes of the policy / procedure / function		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To assess and award housing benefit and council tax benefit quickly and accurately.</li> <li>• Alleviate poverty for Cheshire East residents</li> <li>• Improve living conditions by allowing customers to access suitable housing</li> <li>• Ensure correct benefit take-up.</li> </ul>					
Who is intended to benefit from this policy – procedure – function		Residents of Cheshire East who are on a low income. The benefits they receive are to help improve their quality of life.					
What factors could contribute to or detract from the outcomes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance with complex legislation</li> <li>• Ever changing regulations</li> <li>• IT software</li> <li>• Regular and ongoing staff training</li> <li>• Staff sickness</li> <li>• Customer compliance with regulations.</li> </ul>					
Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy – procedure- function? Please consider key equality groups		Residents of Cheshire East, Cheshire East Council, Department for Work & Pensions, Inland Revenue, Landlords, Housing Associations, Community Information Service.					



Who is responsible for the policy – procedure – function?	Benefits Manager		
Racial equality - Is there an impact?	<b>Yes</b>		<p>Comments: Adverse Impact</p> <p>The adverse impact on these groups is that documentation; leaflets etc are currently only available in English, so possibly not giving the opportunity to non-English speaking customers to claim the benefits they may be entitled to.</p> <p>Procedures are in place for accessing the National Interpreting Services, but not all staff are aware or confident in using the service.</p> <p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Information provided by a Senior Officer within Benefits.</li> <li>•No complaints have been received relating to equality issues.</li> <li>•Viewed the claim form for Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit and Second Adult Rebate</li> <li>•Viewed the Benefits Assessment Team Service Plan.</li> </ul>
Gender Equality (Including trans gender people) - Is there an impact?		<b>No</b>	<p>Comments: No Adverse Impact</p> <p>There would be no differential effect due to the gender of an individual. The service operates in accordance with legislation. Both males and females (including gender transition) receive equal treatment in the assessment of a benefit claim.</p> <p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Discussions with the Benefits Senior Officer.</li> </ul>
Disability Equality - Is there an impact?	<b>Yes</b>		<p>Comments: Positive Impact</p> <p>The function tends to have a positive impact on people with disabilities, in accordance with their needs and where discretion is allowed within legislation. The service can send out visiting officers to assist people in completing their application forms.</p> <p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Discussions with the Benefits Senior Officer.</li> </ul>

Sexual Orientation Equality - Is there an impact?		<b>No</b>	<p>Comments: No Adverse Impact</p> <p>Benefit assessment officers would be aware of an individual's sexual orientation if the person declared this on the claim form; this is required under the civil partnership legislation.</p> <p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Benefits officer confirmed this.</li> </ul>
Age Equality - Is there an impact?	<b>Yes</b>		<p>Comments: Positive Impact</p> <p>A positive impact for older members of this group. The service aims to promote take-up for older people and uses a 3 page application form rather than a 24 page one. For backdates/return of information etc, where discretion is allowed, a beneficial approach is taken.</p> <p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Discussions with the Benefits Senior Officer.</li> </ul>
Religion and Belief Equality - Is there an impact?		<b>No</b>	<p>Comments: No adverse Impact</p> <p>The service would not be aware of this; it is irrelevant for the assessment of housing/council tax benefit.</p> <p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Benefits officer confirmed this.</li> </ul>
<p>Other disadvantaged groups (carers, white families from poor areas).</p> <p>People with dependants or caring responsibilities</p> <p>People with past offending History</p>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<p>Comments: Positive Impact</p> <p>Possibly a beneficial impact on these groups of people. The service would carry out an assessment taking into account the needs of the dependant.</p> <p>The assessor may also refer customers to the visiting team, who will assist them with application forms and provide guidance, aiming to save time for the customer and ensure they gain the benefits they are entitled to.</p> <p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Discussions with the Benefits Senior Officer.</li> </ul> <p>Comments: No adverse Impact</p> <p>In most cases the assessors would be unaware of someone's offending past. If the 'offending past' were benefit fraud then their case would be looked at more rigorously.</p> <p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Benefits officer confirmed this.</li> </ul>

Please give details of any other potential impacts of this policy (i.e. Poverty & deprivation, community cohesion, environmental)	Details: The purpose of the function is to positively assist to customers residing in the Cheshire east region who are in most need of economic support enabling them to		
Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties		<b>No</b>	Comments The function satisfies all current legislative requirements.
Does this policy – procedure – function have any effect on good relations between the council and the community	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	Comments The Housing Benefit function operates strictly in accordance with legislation. Its overall aim is to have a positive impact on Cheshire East residents by encouraging a better quality of life for customers who are on a low income which benefits the community as a whole.
Should the policy – procedure – function proceed to a full equality impact assessment	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	Comments: <b>Option 2</b> Minor action or amendments required <b>Option 2</b> Further research and/or consultation required
If you are not proceeding to a full EIA make sure you have evidence to justify this decision should it be challenged. Please state the date the policy/procedure/function will be reassessed	Details: REVIEW DATE:		
Action	To undertake a review of all correspondence. Standard benefit letters are produced in font size 12 'Times New Roman' style. This is a small typeface and may not be appropriate for all, particularly our customers with visual impairments. The Royal National Institute for the Blind recommends using font size 14, and a clear font style like 'Arial'. To compile diversity procedures for staff. These should include guidance for staff on when an interpreter is needed and what to do when a customer asks for leaflets or documents in a language other than English. These procedures should be made available for all staff within Benefits & Taxation.		

Signed (Service Manager) .....

Date.....

Signed (Head of Section) .....

Date.....

Department	Finance	<b>Full Equality Impact Assessment Template (EIA)</b>	
EIA Ref number	( )	Officer responsible for the Assessment ( )	
Name of Policy Procedure function being assessed	Housing Benefits		
Start date of EIA	Nov 2010	Expected completion date	Nov 2011
Please specify what the questions), issues) and action points will be for this full EIA (based on those identified in the initial EIA)	<p>To undertake a review of all correspondence. Standard benefit letters are produced in font size 12 'Times New Roman' style. This is a small typeface and may not be appropriate for all, particularly our customers with visual impairments. The Royal National Institute for the Blind recommends using font size 14, and a clear font style like 'Arial'.</p> <p>To compile diversity procedures for staff. These should include guidance for staff on when an interpreter is needed and what to do when a customer asks for leaflets or documents in a language other than English. These procedures should be made available for all staff within (Benefits &amp; Taxation).</p>		
Please indicate what research, information and intelligence may be required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Profile of customers claiming this benefit</li> <li>•Existing practices and procedures</li> <li>•Complaints</li> <li>•Stats e.g. Are requests for HB increasing or decreasing, geographic locations</li> <li>•Positive Outcomes/Feedback</li> <li>•Future social/economic forecasts</li> <li>•Third sector</li> </ul>		
	Internal (Staff/Members)	External (stakeholders/service users/partners)	
Please state who will be involved/engaged/consulted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Research and Intelligence Team</li> <li>•IT</li> <li>•Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Race/Ethnic Support Groups</li> <li>•Disability Support groups</li> </ul>	

Please state who will be involved/engaged/consulted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research and Intelligence Team</li> <li>• IT</li> <li>• Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Race/Ethnic Support Groups</li> <li>• Disability Support groups</li> </ul>
	Internal (Staff/Members)	External (stakeholders/service users/partners)
Please state what methods will be used to involve / engage and consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation</li> <li>• Meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation</li> <li>• Meetings</li> </ul>
Please indicate expected costs& resource requirements for completing the EIA	Approx 40 hrs	Approx 15 hrs

## Developing the Action Plan

Equalities Impact Assessment Action plan: Making Changes					
REF	Action	Responsible Person/s	Action Deadline	Tasks	Progress
Policy & Procedure Housing Benefits (Link to	To undertake a review of all correspondence. Standard benefit letters are produced in font size 12 'Times New Roman' style. This is a small typeface and may not be appropriate for all, particularly our customers with visual impairments. The Royal National Institute for the Blind recommends using font size 14, and a clear font style like 'Arial'.	Benefits Mgr	Nov 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Review existing all documentation relevant to Housing Benefits</li> <li>•Consult with specialised local disability groups regarding dissemination and access to information. Stats and good practice models</li> <li>•Establish current process to support our visually impaired customers and can this provision be improved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•All relevant documentation has been made available (upon request) in Arial 14 and in audio format.</li> <li>•Having consulted with the (Local Disability Network, the council have invited the LDN to work with the council around improving communication. meetings have been set up for the second quarter.</li> </ul>
Policy & Procedure Housing Benefits (Link to	To compile diversity procedures for staff. These should include guidance for staff on when an interpreter is needed and what to do when a customer asks for leaflets or documents in a language other than English. These procedures should be made available for all staff within Benefits & Taxation.	Benefits Mgr	Nov 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Develop training programme to create awareness and guidance to staff ensuring efficient and effective dissemination, access and collation of information and documentation to non English speaking/reading customers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•A series of workshops have been developed and currently being delivered to support staff better understand the needs of communicating and disseminating information to non English speaking/reading customers.</li> </ul>

## (Quarterly) EIA Progress Report

REF	Action	Progress	Completed
Policy & Procedure Housing Benefits (Link to	To undertake a review of all correspondence. Standard benefit letters are produced in font size 12 'Times New Roman' style. This is a small typeface and may not be appropriate for all, particularly our customers with visual impairments. The Royal National Institute for the Blind recommends using font size 14, and a clear font style like 'Arial'.	All available documentation have been made available (upon request) in Arial 14 and in audio format. Having consulted with the (Local Disability Network), the council have invited the LDN to work with the council around improving communication. Meetings have been set up for the second quarter.	No Ongoing expected to deliver within timeframe
Policy & Procedure Housing Benefits (Link to	To compile diversity procedures for staff. These should include guidance for staff on when an interpreter is needed and what to do when a customer asks for leaflets or documents in a language other than English. These procedures should be made available for all staff within Benefits & Taxation.	A series of workshops have been developed to support staff better understand the needs of communicating and disseminating information to non English speaking/reading customers.	Yes Workshops currently being delivered

Once you have completed your progress report, please return it to the Equality and Diversity Team. You will then complete a further progress report template in three months time.

## Monitoring Impact Report

Ref	Action	Impact	Outcome	Review Date
Policy & Procedure Housing Benefits (Link to	To undertake a review of all correspondence. Standard benefit letters are produced in font size 12 'Times New Roman' style. This is a small typeface and may not be appropriate for all, particularly our customers with visual impairments. The Royal National Institute for the Blind recommends using font size 14, and a clear font style like 'Arial'.			(12 Months/3 Years from completion Date)
Policy & Procedure Housing Benefits (Link to	To compile diversity procedures for staff. These should include guidance for staff on when an interpreter is needed and what to do when a customer asks for leaflets or documents in a language other than English. These procedures should be made available for all staff within Benefits & Taxation.			(12 Months/3 Years from completion Date)